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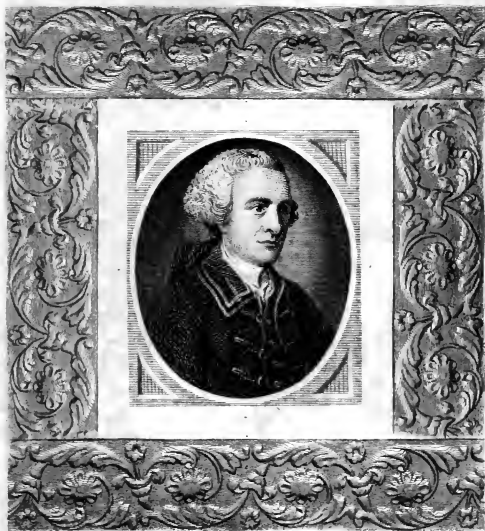
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JOHN H. H. H.

( LIVES OF )  
AMERICAN-MERCHANTS



( NEW-YORK )  
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1844

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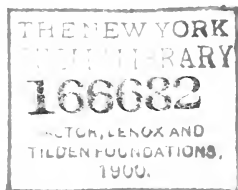
LIVES  
OF  
AMERICAN MERCHANTS,  
EMINENT  
FOR  
INTEGRITY, ENTERPRISE AND PUBLIC SPIRIT.

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BY THE AUTHOR OF  
"THE YOUNG MERCHANT," "THE YOUNG MECHANIC," &c.

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NEW YORK,  
SAXTON AND MILES,  
205 BROADWAY.  
1844.



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## P R E F A C E.

THE biography of eminent men stimulates the exertions of those who are themselves seeking honor in the path of usefulness. Their example is a treasure which should be preserved for the benefit of succeeding generations. When those who have added to honorable exertion in their own proper calling or profession patriotic deeds and sacrifices for the public good, have departed from this earthly scene of action, the record of their lives should be transmitted to those who follow them in the same profession. The merchants of this country, though often thoughtlessly charged with a disposition to regard nothing but their own interests, or at most the general interests of commerce, have always shown themselves, in great public emergencies, among the most devoted of our illustrious band of patriots. They have repeatedly stood forward in the darkest hours of our country's peril, to save her by sacrifices and exertions. They not only furnished the "sinews of war" from their coffers, but the bravest of warriors from their number.

The purpose of the present volume is to make known

to the present generation the illustrious characters of some of the more eminent American merchants who have signalized themselves by worth and patriotism in past times. There are many merchants of the same noble character now on the stage of life, ready to make sacrifices of property and to peril life for the honor and welfare of their beloved country. The compiler of this volume, while he would preserve in a collective form the biographies of the illustrious dead, believes that he may render good service to the country by exciting a noble emulation in the bosoms of the young men who are destined hereafter to sustain among the various classes of their fellow citizens the well earned character and spotless honor of the American merchant. At the same time he would commend to the notice of those who are engaged in other pursuits, the example of those who have shown that the successful pursuit of commerce is not incompatible with great usefulness and high distinction in public life. He trusts that in future scenes of peril, which may come upon our country, there will be found new Hancocks and Langdons, Laurenses and Morrisises in every profession and rank of life, whose deeds will cause their names to be enrolled in the bright records of American patriotism.

# LIVES OF AMERICAN MERCHANTS.

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## SAMUEL ADAMS.

SAMUEL ADAMS, whose name is associated with all the great events of the American revolution, was born in Boston in the state of Massachusetts, September 22, 1722. His ancestors were among the first settlers of New England. His parents were very respectable. His father was for many years a representative for the town of Boston in the Massachusetts house of assembly, in which he was annually elected till his death. He was a justice of the peace for many years, and a selectman of the town; possessed considerable wealth, and was respected and esteemed.

Samuel Adams acquired his preparatory knowledge at the celebrated Latin grammar school of Mr. Lovell, where he was remarkably attentive to his studies. His conduct was similar while he was at college, and during the

whole term he had to pay but one fine, and this was for not attending morning prayers, in consequence of having overslept himself. By a close and steady application, he acquired much classical and scientific knowledge.

At an early age he was admitted a student at Harvard University. In 1740, and 1743, the respective degrees of bachelor and master of arts were conferred upon him. On the latter occasion, he proposed the following question for discussion, "whether it be lawful to resist the supreme magistrate, if the commonwealth cannot otherwise be preserved?" He maintained the affirmative of this proposition, and thus evinced, at this early period of life, his attachment to the liberties of the people. While he was a student, his father allowed him a regular and fixed stipend. Of this, he saved a sufficient sum, to publish, at his own expense, a pamphlet, called "Englishmen's Rights."

His father intended him for the bar, but this determination, at the solicitation of his mother, was altered, and he was put an apprentice to Mr. Thomas Cushing, then an eminent merchant.

The study of politics was, however, his chief

delight. At this time he formed a club, each member of which agreed to furnish a political essay for a newspaper called the Independent Advertiser. These essays brought the writers into notice, who were called, in derision, "the whipping post club."

When he arrived at a proper age, his father gave him a considerable capital, with which he commenced business. He had not been long in trade when he credited one of his countrymen with a sum of money. This person, soon after met with heavy calamities, which he represented to Mr. Adams, who never demanded the amount, although it was nearly half the value of his original stock.

At the age of twenty-five, his father died, and as he was the eldest son, the care of the family and management of the estate, devolved upon him.

He was twice married. By his first wife, who was the daughter of the late Rev. Doctor Checkley of Boston, he had several children, all of whom died when young, except one son and one daughter. The former, Doctor Adams, died in 1787.

Mr. Adams was known as a political writer during the administration of governor Shirley

of Massachusetts, to whom he was opposed, as he conceived the union of so much military and civil power in one man, to be dangerous.

In 1763, the Massachusetts agent in London transmitted intelligence, that it was contemplated by the ministry, to "tax the colonies for the purpose of raising a revenue, which was to be replaced, at the disposal of the crown." This was soon made publicly known, and produced great excitement. It was expected, that governor Bernard would immediately call the Massachusetts house of assembly together, on the reception of this interesting intelligence, and that such instructions would be sent to the agent, as might have a tendency to prevent those contemplated proceedings; but, to the surprise of the public, it was not called together till the latter end of that year, and no particular notice was taken of the subject. It thus remained till the next election of members to the Massachusetts assembly in May, 1764. It was then customary for the people to give written instructions, when they elected their representatives, in which they expressed their views and opinions of public affairs; and for this purpose committees were chosen. On this occasion, Mr. Adams was one of the five,

who were selected by the people of Boston. The instructions were written by him, his autographical manuscript of which is now perfect. His draught was reported, accepted by the town, and at that time published in the Boston Gazette; and, what is the most material fact, it was the first public document that denied the "supremacy of the British parliament, and their right to tax the colonists without their own consent."

In the year 1764, there was a private political club in Boston, where decisive measures originated, which gave a secret spring and impulse to the motions of the public body. Mr. Adams was one of the patriotic conclave. It was the determination of this confederacy, to resist every infringement of their rights. The stamp act was a flagrant violation of them, and to suffer it quietly to be carried into effect, would establish a precedent, and encourage further proceedings of a similar nature. Mr. Adams was not averse to the manner in which the people evinced their determinate opposition, by destroying the stamped papers and office in Boston; but he highly disapproved the riots and disorders which followed, and personally aided the civil power to put a stop to them.

Mr. Adams received this year (1765,) further proof of the confidence of the people, by being elected a member of the Massachusetts house of assembly for the town of Boston. He was soon chosen clerk, and acquired great influence in the legislature. He continued a member for nearly ten years.

The congress which assembled at New York, at this period was attributed to a suggestion made by Mr. Adams. In Sullivan's Biographical Sketch, published in the Boston Chronicle, in 1803, we find the following remark: "It has been said, that he was the man who originated a congress of the colonies. He certainly, was the first man who proposed it in this state (Massachusetts,) though governor Bowdoin and Doctor Franklin were with him in the measure."

Several able essays were written by him, and published in the Boston Gazette in 1768, on the existing disputes between the colonies and Great Britain, signed Vindex.

In consequence of the act imposing duties in 1767, Mr. Adams suggested a non-importation agreement with the merchants. This was agreed to, and signed by nearly all of them in the province. They bound themselves, if the



duties were not repealed, not to import, or to order any, but certain enumerated articles, after the first of January, 1769.

Some years before the revolution, it was reported, that Mr. Adams was offered a lucrative place under the British government, if he would change his political conduct, and abandon that cause and interest, in which he was engaged. That this offer was made after the dissolution of the general assembly of that year, soon after its first session ; that, in consequence of this last circumstance, he was deprived of a stipend allowed to him by the representatives, as the clerk of the house, which, though small, was still a great part of his support. But yet, in this critical condition, he reprobated the offer, choosing rather to subsist by individual, or common beneficence, or even parish, than to sacrifice the cause of truth, and betray the liberty of his country.

On the evening of the 5th of March, 1770, an affray took place between the military quartered in Boston, and some citizens, which resulted in a loss of lives on both sides. On the following morning, a public meeting was called, and Samuel Adams addressed the assembly, with that impressive eloquence which was so

peculiar to himself. The people, on this occasion, chose a committee to wait upon the lieutenant governor, to require that the troops be immediately withdrawn from the town. The mission, however, proved unsuccessful, and another resolution was immediately adopted, that a new committee be chosen to wait a second time upon governor Hutchinson, for the purpose of conveying the sense of the meeting in a more peremptory manner. Mr. Adams acted as chairman. They waited on the lieutenant governor, and communicated this last vote of the town ; and in a speech of some length, Mr. Adams stated the danger of keeping the troops longer in the capital, fully proving the illegality of the act itself ; and enumerating the fatal consequences that would ensue, if he refused an immediate compliance with the vote. Lieutenant governor Hutchinson, with his usual prevarication, replied, and roundly asserted, that there was no illegality in the measure ; and repeated, that the troops were not subject to his authority, but that he would direct the removal of the 29th regiment. Mr. Adams again rose. The magnitude of the subject, and the manner in which it was treated by lieutenant governor Hutchinson, had now roused the impetuous feelings

of his patriotic soul. With indignation strongly expressed in his countenance, and in a firm, resolute, and commanding manner, he replied, "that it was well known, that, acting as governor of the province, he was, by its charter, the commander in chief of his majesty's military and naval forces, and as such, the troops were subject to his orders; and if he had the power to remove one regiment, he had the power to remove both, and nothing short of this would satisfy the people, and it was at his peril, if the vote of the town was not immediately complied with, and if it be longer delayed, he alone, must be answerable for the fatal consequences that would ensue." This produced a momentary silence. It was now dark, and the people were waiting with anxious suspense for the report of their committee. A conference in whispers followed between lieutenant governor Hutchinson and Colonel Dalrymple. The former, finding himself so closely pressed, and the fallacy and absurdity of his arguments thus glaringly exposed, yielded up his positions, and gave his consent to the removal of both regiments; and Colonel Dalrymple pledged his word of honour, that he would begin his preparations in the morning, and that there should

be no unnecessary delay, until the whole of both regiments were removed to the castle.

At a very early period of the controversy between the mother country and the colonies, Mr. Adams was impressed with the importance of establishing committees of correspondence. In 1766, he made some suggestions on this subject in a letter to a friend in South Carolina ; but it was found to be either impracticable or inexpedient before the year 1772, when it was first adopted by Massachusetts, on a motion of Mr. Adams at a public town meeting in Boston. This plan was followed by all the provinces. Mr. Adams's private letters may have advanced this important work. In a letter to Richard Henry Lee, Esq. of Virginia, which, unfortunately, is without a date, is the following remark : " I would propose it for your consideration, whether the establishment of committees of correspondence among the several towns in every colony, would not tend to promote the general union upon which the security of the whole depends." It will be remembered that the resolutions for the establishment of this institution in Virginia, were passed March 12, 1773, which was more than four months subsequently to the time it had been formed in Boston.

Every method had been tried to induce Mr. Adams to abandon the cause of his country, which he had supported with so much zeal, courage, and ability. Threats and caresses had proved equally unavailing. Prior to this time, there is no certain proof that any direct attempt was made upon his virtue and integrity, although a report had been publicly and freely circulated, that it had been unsuccessfully tried by governor Bernard. Hutchinson knew him too well to make the attempt. But governor Gage was empowered to try the experiment. He sent him a confidential and verbal message by colonel Fenton, who waited upon Mr. Adams, and after the customary salutations, he stated the object of his visit. He said, that an adjustment of the disputes which existed between England and the colonies, and a reconciliation, was very desirable, as well as important to the interest of both. That he was authorized from governor Gage to assure him, that he had been empowered to confer upon him such benefits as would be satisfactory, upon the condition, that he would engage to cease in his opposition to the measures of government. He also observed, that it was the advice of governor Gage to him, not to incur

the further displeasure of his majesty ; that his conduct had been such as made him liable to the penalties of an act of Henry VIII. by which persons could be sent to England for trial of treason, or misprison of treason, at the discretion of a governor of a province, but by changing his political course, he would not only receive great personal advantages, but would thereby make his peace with the king. Mr. Adams listened with apparent interest to this recital. He asked colonel Fenton if he would truly deliver his reply as it should be given. After some hesitation he assented. Mr. Adams required his word of honour, which he pledged.

Then rising from his chair, and assuming a determined manner, he replied, “ I trust I have long since made *my peace with the King of kings*. No personal consideration shall induce me to abandon the righteous cause of my country. Tell governor Gage, *it is the advice of Samuel Adams to him*, no longer to insult the feelings of an exasperated people.”

With a full sense of his own perilous situation, marked out an object of ministerial vengeance, labouring under severe pecuniary embarrassment, but fearless of personal conse-

quences, he steadily pursued the great object of his soul, the liberty of the people.

The time required bold and inflexible measures. Common distress required common counsel. The aspect was appalling to some of the most decided patriots of the day. The severity of punishment which was inflicted on the people of Boston, by the power of England, produced a melancholy sadness on the friends of American freedom. The Massachusetts house of assembly was then in session at Salem. A committee of that body was chosen to consider and report the state of the province. Mr. Adams, it is said, observed, that some of the committee were for mild measures, which he judged no way suited to the present emergency. He conferred with Mr. Warren of Plymouth upon the necessity of spirited measures, and then said, "do you keep the committee in play, and I will go and make a caucus by the time the evening arrives, and do you meet me." Mr. Adams secured a meeting of about five principal members of the house at the time specified, and repeated his endeavours for the second and third nights, when the number amounted to more than thirty. The friends of the administration knew nothing of the mat-

ter. The popular leaders took the sense of the members in a private way, and found that they would be able to carry their scheme by a sufficient majority. They had their whole plan completed, prepared their resolutions, and then determined to bring the business forward; but before they commenced, the door keeper was ordered to let no person in, or suffer any one to depart. The subjects for discussion were then introduced by Mr. Adams, with his usual eloquence on such great occasions. He was chairman of the committee, and reported the resolutions, for the appointment of delegates to a general congress to be convened at Philadelphia, to consult on the general safety of America. This report was received with surprise and astonishment by the administration party. Such was the apprehension of some, that they were apparently desirous to desert the question. The door keeper seemed uneasy at his charge, and wavering with regard to the performance of the duty assigned to him. At this critical juncture, Mr. Adams relieved him, by taking the key and keeping it himself. The resolutions were passed, five delegates, consisting of Samuel Adams, Thomas Cushing, Robert Treat Paine, John Adams, and James Bowdoin, were appoint-



ed, the expense was estimated, and funds were voted for the payment. Before the business was finally closed, a member made a plea of indisposition, and was allowed to leave the house. This person went directly to the governor, and informed him of their high handed proceedings. The governor immediately sent his secretary to dissolve the assembly, who found the door locked. He demanded entrance, but was answered, that his desire could not be complied with, until some important business, then before the house, was concluded. Finding every method to gain admission ineffectual, he read the order on the stairs for an immediate dissolution of the assembly. The order, however, was disregarded by the house. They continued their deliberations, passed all their intended measures, and then obeyed the mandate for dissolution.

After many unavailing efforts, both by threats and promises, to allure this inflexible patriot from his devotion to the sacred cause of independence, governor Gage, at length on the 12th of June 1775, issued that memorable proclamation of which the following is an extract. "In this exigency of complicated calamities, I avail myself of the last effort within the bounds of my duty, to spare the further effu-

sion of blood, to offer, and I do hereby in his majesty's name offer and promise, his most gracious pardon to all persons who shall forthwith lay down their arms, and return to the duties of peaceable subjects, excepting only from the benefit of such pardon, *Samuel Adams, and John Hancock*, whose offences are of two flagitious a nature to admit of any other consideration than that of condign punishment. This was a diploma, conferring greater honours on the individuals, than any other which was within the power of his Britannic majesty to bestow.

In a letter dated April, 1776, at Philadelphia, while he was in congress, to major Hawley of Massachusetts, he said, "I am perfectly satisfied of the necessity of a public and explicit declaration of independence. I cannot conceive, what good reason can be assigned against it. Will it widen the breach? This would be a strange question after we have raised armies and fought battles with the British troops;—set up an American navy, permitted the inhabitants of these colonies to fit out armed vessels to capture the ships, &c. belonging to any of the inhabitants of Great Britain; declaring them the enemies of the United Colonies,

and torn into shivers their acts of trade, by allowing commerce, subject to regulations to be made by ourselves, with the people of all countries, except such as are subject to the British king. It cannot, surely, after all this, be imagined, that we consider ourselves, or mean to be considered by others, in any other state, than that of independence. But moderate whigs are disgusted with our mentioning the word ! Sensible tories are better politicians. *They* know, that no foreign power can consistently yield comfort to rebels, or enter into any kind of treaty with these colonies, till they declare themselves free and independent. They are in hopes, by our protracting this decisive step, we shall grow weary of the war, and that for want of foreign connexions and assistance, we shall be driven to the necessity of acknowledging the tyrant, and submitting to the tyranny. These are the hopes and expectations of the tories, while moderate gentlemen are flattering themselves with the prospect of a reconciliation, when the commissioners that are talked of shall arrive. A mere amusement indeed ! What terms of reconciliation are we to expect from them that will be acceptable to the people of America ? Will the king of Great Britain

empower his commissioners even to promise the repeal of all, or any of his obnoxious and oppressive acts? Can he do it? or if he could, has he even yet discovered a disposition which evinced the least degree of that princely virtue—Clemency?”

In another letter to James Warren, Esq., dated Baltimore, December 31, 1776, he said, “I assure you, business has been done since we came to this place, more to my satisfaction than any or every thing done before, excepting the ‘Declaration of Independence,’ which should have been made immediately after the 19th of April, 1775.”

Notwithstanding we had raised armies, built navies, fought battles, and had seen the public grievances still unredressed, yet the minds of many of the leading whigs were not prepared for the great question of a final separation of the two countries, till July 4, 1776.

Mr. Adams, in a letter to B——K—— Esq. in Philadelphia, says, “That it has been difficult for a number of persons sent from all parts of so extensive a territory, and representing colonies, (or as I must now call them *states*,) which in many respects have had different interests and views, to unite in measures

materially to affect them all. Hence, our determinations have been necessarily slow. We have, however, gone on from step to step, till at length we are arrived at perfection, as you have heard, in a declaration of independence. Was there ever a revolution brought about, especially so important a one as this, without great internal tumults, and violent convulsions; The delegates of every colony, have given their voices in favour of the great question? and the people, I am told, recognize the revolution as if it were a decree promulgated from heaven! I have thought, that if this decisive measure had been taken six months earlier, it would have given vigour to our northern army, and a different issue to our military exertions in Canada. But probably I was mistaken. The colonies were not then all ripe for so momentous a change. It was necessary that they should be united, and it required time and patience to remove old prejudices;—to instruct the unenlightened;—to convince the doubting;—and to fortify the timid.”

The character of Mr. Adams had become celebrated in foreign countries. In 1773, he had been chosen a member of the society of the bill of rights in London; and in 1774, John

Adams and Doctor Joseph Warren were elected on his nomination.

Our patriots, in their progress to independence, had successfully encountered many formidable obstacles ; but in the year 1777, still greater difficulties arose, at the prospect of which, some of the stoutest hearts began to falter. It was at this critical juncture, after congress had resolved to adjourn from Philadelphia to Lancaster, that some of the leading members accidentally met in company with each other. A conversation in mutual confidence ensued. Mr. Adams who was one of the number, was cheerful and undismayed at the aspect of affairs, while the countenances of his friends were strongly marked with the desponding feelings of their hearts. The conversation naturally turned upon the subject which most engaged their feelings. Each took occasion to express his opinions on the situation of the public cause, and all were gloomy and sad. Mr. Adams listened in silence till they had finished. He then said, "Gentlemen, your spirits appear to be heavily oppressed with our public calamities, I hope you do not despair of our final success?" It was answered, "That the chance was desperate." Mr. Adams

replied, "if this be our language, it is so, indeed. If we wear long faces, they will become fashionable. The people take their tone from ours, and if we despair, can it be expected that they will continue their efforts in what we conceive to be a hopeless cause? Let us banish such feelings, and show a spirit that will keep alive the confidence of the people, rather than damp their courage. Better tidings will soon arrive. Our cause is just and righteous, and we shall never be abandoned by Heaven while we show ourselves worthy of its aid and protection."

At this time there were but twenty-eight of the members of congress present at Philadelphia. Mr. Adams said, "That this was the smallest but the truest congress they ever had."

But a few days had elapsed, when the news arrived of the glorious success at Saratoga, which gave a new complexion to our affairs, and confidence to our hopes.

Soon after this, lord Howe, the earl of Carlisle, and Mr. Eden, arrived as commissioners to treat for peace, under lord North's conciliatory proposition. Mr. Adams was one of the committee chosen by congress to draught an answer to their letter. In this, it is stated, "That congress will readily attend to such terms

of peace, as may consist with the honour of an independent nation."

At this time, the enemies of our freedom were busily employed to create disunion among its friends. Reports were circulated of attempts to deprive general Washington of his command, in which, it was said, Mr. Adams was the principal leader. This was not true. It is possible, that some warm expressions may have fallen from him, when he spoke of the multiplied disasters which attended our military operations, and of the effects they produced on the public mind; and for political purposes, our opponents gave to them, probably, a different and distorted sense.

In a letter to his friend Richard Henry Lee, Esq., dated in 1789, in speaking of executive appointments as provided for in the constitution of the United States, he thus notices that subject: "I need not tell you who have known so thoroughly the sentiments of my heart, that I have always had a very high esteem for the late commander in chief of our armies; and I now most sincerely believe, that while president Washington continues in the chair, he will be able to give, to all good men, a satisfactory reason for every instance of his public conduct.



I feel myself constrained, contrary to my usual manner to make professions of sincerity on this occasion, because doctor Gordon, in his History of the Revolution, has gravely said, that I was concerned in an attempt to remove general Washington from command ; and mentions an anonymous letter to your late governor Henry, which I affirm, I never saw, nor heard of, till I lately met with it in reading the history."

In 1779, Samuel Adams was placed by the state convention on a committee, to prepare and report a form of government for Massachusetts. By this committee he and John Adams were appointed a sub-committee to furnish a draught of the constitution. The draught produced by them was reported to the convention, and, after some amendments, accepted. The address of the convention to the people was jointly written by them.

In 1781, he was elected a member of the senate of Massachusetts, and was shortly afterwards elevated to the presidency of that body.

In 1787, he was chosen a member of the Massachusetts convention for the ratification of the constitution of the United States. He had some objections to it in its reported form ;

the principal of which was to that article which rendered the several states amenable to the courts of the nation. He thought that this would reduce them to mere corporations. There was a very powerful opposition to it, and some of its most zealous friends and supporters were fearful that it would not be accepted.

Mr. Adams had not then given his sentiments upon it in the convention; but regularly attended the debates.

Some of the leading advocates waited upon Mr. Adams and Mr. Hancock, to ascertain their opinions and wishes, in a private manner. Mr. Adams stated his objections, and said that he should not give it his support, unless certain amendments were recommended to be adopted. These he enumerated. Mr. Hancock was president of the convention, and at that time confined to his house by indisposition. His opinion coincided with that of Mr. Adams, and he observed, that he would attend and give it his support upon the same condition expressed by Mr. Adams. This was mutually agreed to. Mr. Adams prepared his amendments, which were brought before the convention, and referred to a committee, who

made some inconsiderable alterations, with which the constitution was accepted. Some of these were afterwards agreed to as amendments, and form, at present, a part of that instrument.

In 1789, he was elected lieutenant governor of the state of Massachusetts, and continued to fill that office till 1794, when he was chosen governor of that state. He was annually re-elected till 1797, when, oppressed with years and infirmities, he declined being a candidate, and retired to private life.

After many years of incessant exertions, employed in the establishment of the independence of America, he died on the 3d October, 1803, in the 82d year of his age, in indigent circumstances.

The person of Samuel Adams was of the middle size. His countenance was a true index of his mind, and possessed those lofty and elevated characteristics, which are always found to accompany true greatness.

He was a steady professor of the Christian religion, and uniformly attended public worship. His family devotions were regularly performed, and his morality was never impeached.

In his manners and deportment, he was sincere and unaffected ; in conversation, pleasing and instructive ; and in his friendships, steadfast and affectionate.

His revolutionary labours were not surpassed by those of any individual. From the commencement of the dispute with Great Britain, he was incessantly employed in public service ; opposing at one time, the doctrine of the supremacy of “parliament in all cases,” taking the lead in questions of controverted policy with the royal governors, writing state papers from 1765, to 1774 ;—in planning and organizing clubs and committees, haranguing in town meetings, or filling the columns of public prints with essays adapted to the spirit and temper of the times. In addition to these occupations, he maintained an extensive and laborious correspondence with the friends of American freedom in Great Britain and in the provinces.

No man was more intrepid and dauntless, when encompassed by dangers, or more calm and unmoved amid public disasters and adverse fortune. His bold and daring conduct and language, subjected him to great personal hazards. Had any fatal event occurred to our country, by which she had fallen in her

struggle for liberty, Samuel Adams would have been the first victim of ministerial vengeance. His blood would have been first shed as a sacrifice on the altar of tyranny, for the noble magnanimity and independence, with which he defended the cause of freedom. But such was his firmness, that he probably would have met death with as much composure, as he regarded it with unconcern.

His writings were numerous, and much distinguished for their elegance and fervour ; but unfortunately the greater part of them have been lost, or so distributed as to render their collection impossible.

He was the author of a letter to the Earl of Hillsborough ; — of many political essays directed against the administration of governor Shirley ; — of a letter in answer to Thomas Paine, in defence of Christianity, and of an oration published in the year 1776.

Four letters of his correspondence on government are extant, and were published in a pamphlet form in 1800.

The venerable John Adams relates, that on one occasion, he went into Samuel Adams' room, and found him alone and busily engaged in destroying manuscript documents. He

enquired why he did it; and the reply was "that no papers should be found in his possession, that might endanger the persons of others."

Mr. Adams' eloquence was of a peculiar character. His language was pure, concise, and impressive. He was more logical than figurative. His arguments were addressed rather to the understanding, than to the feelings; yet he always engaged the deepest attention of his audience. On ordinary occasions, there was nothing remarkable in his speeches; but on great questions, when his own feelings were interested, he would combine every thing great in oratory. In the language of an elegant writer, the great qualities of his mind were fully displayed, in proportion as the field for their exertion was extended; and the energy of his language was not inferior to the depth of his mind. An eloquence, not consisting of theatrical gesture, or the pomp of words, but that which was a true picture of a heart glowing with the sublime enthusiasm and ardour of patriotism; an eloquence, to which his fellow citizens listened with applause and rapture; and little inferior to the best models of antiquity, for simplicity, majesty, and persuasion.

## HENRY LAURENS.

HENRY LAURENS was born in Charleston, South Carolina, in the year 1724. He was descended from ancestors who were French protestant refugees, and left France after the revocation of the edict of Nantz. They landed at New York, where they resided some time, and afterwards settled at the place of his birth. The superintendence of his education was first given to Mr. Howe, and subsequently, to Mr. Corbett ; but of the nature of his studies, or the extent of his acquirements, we are not told. He was regularly bred to mercantile pursuits under the direction of Thomas Smith of Charleston, afterwards of Mr. Crockatt of London, and was remarkable through life, for his peculiar observance of method in business. When he returned from London he entered into trade with Mr. Austin of Charleston. In whatever he was engaged, he was distinguished for his extraordinary punctuality. Allowing nothing ever to interfere with his own, he invariably discountenanced the violations of it by others. What

a noble example for every young man steadily to hold in view ! It was the constant possession of these lofty and dignified feelings, and a rigid attention to his duties, which ensured him success through life, and served as a constant passport, in his progress, to that eminent distinction, which he afterwards so justly enjoyed.

Such was his reputation as a man of business, that to have served an apprenticeship in the counting house of Mr. Laurens, was a high recommendation. Industrious almost to an extreme himself, he demanded a corresponding attention and labour on the part of those in his employ. It is said that he required but little sleep, and a considerable portion of the affairs of the day received his attention during a great part of the night. No man surpassed, perhaps few equalled him, in the execution of business. Rising early, and devoting the morning to the counting-house, he not unfrequently finished his concerns before others had left their beds. His letters, whether on friendship or business, were clear and forcible, and in a style admirably adapted to this species of writing. Two volumes of his official public correspondence, while president of the old congress, remain in its archives.



Few men, perhaps, possessed a deeper knowledge of human nature ; and the quickness with which he formed correct opinions of others from their appearance, was very remarkable. In proof of this, we are told that he was engaged in trade about twenty-three years, and that at the conclusion of the affairs of the partnership, which comprised transactions to an immense amount, he proposed to take all outstanding debts as cash, at a discount of five per cent. on their gross amount.

His colloquial powers were very great, and afforded delight and instruction to every company. Reproving with gentleness, his advice was at all times valued for its soundness and sincerity. Such was his integrity, and such were his views of justice, that he would on no occasion draw bills of exchange till he first obtained an acknowledgment in writing from those on whom he designed to draw, that they were indebted to him. He cheerfully, but moderately, partook of proper diversions, but retained, during his whole life, an invincible aversion to playing any game for pecuniary consideration.

We are told that, in several instances, he yielded to the improper fashion of deciding controversies by single combat. In each instance,

he received the fire of his adversary without returning it. Of his generosity there are many instances. He was engaged, on one occasion, in a law suit with the judge of the court of vice-admiralty, and resisted the claims of the royal government, which, by some regulations, were opposed to American rights. Failing in his suit, Mr. Laurens tendered to the judge, Sir Egerton Leigh, his legal fees, which were considerable. The judge declining their acceptance, Mr. Laurens presented the amount of them to the South Carolina society for charitable purposes. On another occasion, he received money in some official character, which had not been demanded. Disclaiming the idea of his having any right to keep it, he transferred it to the same society till it should be applied for by the owner.

Strict and exemplary in his religious duties, he was found regularly at church. With the holy scriptures he was well acquainted, and took great delight in applying portions of them to the common occurrences of life. They were not only regularly read by himself to his family, but his children were early instructed to read them also at stated periods. His family bible contained, in his own hand-writing, sev-

eral observations on passing providences. He has been often heard to say, that many of the best passages of distinguished authors were borrowed either in the matter or the style from sacred writ, and he quoted the following among other instances, "God tempers the wind to the back of the shorn lamb" of Sterne, as an imitation of "He stayeth his rough wind in the day of the east wind" of the prophet Isaiah. He was charmed with the writings of Solomon, for the knowledge of human nature which they imparted, and conceived that the observance of their maxims would greatly contribute to the wisdom and happiness of society.

Requiring of his servants the exact execution of their several duties, compelling the observance of decency and order, their wants and comforts were never neglected, and to their moral and religious instruction he was invariably attentive.

He once obtained of a favourite slave his consent, though much against his will, to receive the small-pox by inoculation, but by which he lost his life. With a view of administering to the faithful, though unfortunate domestic, in his last dying moments, all the consolation that this distressing case seemed to

admit, Mr. Laurens gave to him positive assurances, with which he afterwards most strictly complied, that his children should be emancipated.

Having lost an amiable and beloved wife, and possessed of a large estate, he entirely relinquished business, and in the year 1771, visited Europe, principally for the purpose of superintending the education of his sons, by whose attainments his highest expectations were fully realized.

He was one of the thirty-nine native Americans who endeavoured, by their petition, to prevent the British parliament from passing the Boston port bill.

Every exertion on the part of the colonies to prevent a war proving entirely fruitless, he hastened home, with a determination to take part with his countrymen against Great Britain. Persuasions and entreaties were used to divert him from the resolution he had formed, dazzling prospects were held out to his view, and even large offers were made, by which he would be indemnified for any losses he might sustain, by his remaining in England. But this ornament of his country, burning with patriotism and the love of liberty, ever dignified,

firm, and incorruptible, rejected these despicable propositions, with a magnanimity of spirit worthy of his exalted character.

How beautiful, yet forcible, is his reply on his embarkation from Falmouth for Charleston, to a mercantile friend, Mr. Oswald, who urged him to continue in Great Britain :—" I shall never forget your friendly attention to my interest ; but I dare not return. Your ministers are deaf to information, and seem bent on provoking unnecessary contest. I think I have acted the part of a faithful subject. I now go, resolved still to labour for peace, at the same time determined in the last event to stand or fall with my country." On his departure from England, he expressed his conviction, that America would not submit to the claims of the British parliament ; and when he arrived at Charleston in December 1774, he mentioned to his friends his opinion, that Britain would not only reject their demands, but that war would inevitably take place. From his acknowledged weight of character, it may readily be supposed, that such information would receive the most implicit confidence, and, accordingly, vigorous and extensive preparations for defence were made early in 1775 by the Carolinians.

The circumstance of his leaving England at this important crisis, expressly to defend the cause of independence, served to confirm, in the highest degree, that unbounded confidence in his fidelity and patriotism, which his friends, through the whole course of his career, had such ample cause to entertain.

On his arrival, no attentions were withheld which it was possible to bestow. Offices were conferred and honours heaped upon him. He became president of the council of safety, with a full persuasion that his life was endangered by this situation. Soon after the establishment of a regular constitution in South Carolina in 1776, he was elected a member of congress, and shortly after he had taken his seat, was appointed president of that honourable body, over which he presided with his usual integrity, industry, and decision. About this period, the British commissioners arrived, under the delusive hope of being able to induce the Americans to abrogate their alliance with France, and to become once more free British subjects. Governor Johnson, one of the commissioners, presented private letters of introduction to Mr. Laurens. In December 1778, he relinquished his situation as president of congress, for what

reason we are not told, and received its thanks “for his conduct in the chair, and in the execution of public business.” His acknowledgments were returned for the honour conferred upon him, which, he observed, “would be of service to his children.” In the following year, he received the appointment of minister plenipotentiary from the United States to Holland; and being captured on his voyage was taken to England, and there imprisoned in the Tower of London on suspicion of treason, and was officially mentioned by sir Joseph York, as “styling himself president of the pretended congress.” The commitment was accompanied with orders, “to confine him a close prisoner—to be locked up every night—to be in the custody of two warders—not to suffer him to be out of their sight one moment, day or night—to allow him no liberty of speaking to any person, nor to permit any person to speak to him—to deprive him of the use of pen and ink—to suffer no letter to be brought to him, nor any to go from him.”

Afflicted with the gout and other diseases—his head whitened with the snows of fifty-six winters,—in a situation full of misery,—his cup of sorrow seemed to be full to overflowing.

This venerable and illustrious prisoner was confined to two small rooms, with a warder for his constant companion, and a fixed bayonet, paraded under his window, enjoying neither friend to converse with, nor means of correspondence. Deprived of pen and ink, he at length fortunately procured pencils. After a month's confinement, permission was granted to him to exercise on limited ground, but a warder armed with a sword followed him closely. He had availed himself of this indulgence for about three weeks, when Lord George Gordon, who was also imprisoned in the Tower, unluckily met and asked Mr. Laurens to walk with him. Mr. Laurens declined the offer, and hastened to his apartment. Governor Gore, provoked at this transgression of his positive orders, locked him up for thirty-seven days, though the attending warder proved Mr. Laurens perfectly innocent of the violation of any established rule. About this time, one of his friends and mercantile correspondents, interested in his welfare, solicited the secretaries of state to grant Mr. Laurens an enlargement on parole, and offered his fortune as security for his good conduct. The following message to Mr. Laurens was the result :—" Their lord-



ships say, if you will point out any thing for the benefit of Great Britain in the present dispute with the colonies, you will be enlarged." This proposition inspired him with the noblest feelings, and raising his proud soul above the acceptance of any allurements founded in ignoble views, induced the keenest replication. The same friend, soon after, during a private interview with Mr. Laurens, observed, "I converse with you this morning, not particularly as your friend, but as the friend of Great Britain. I have certain propositions to make for obtaining your liberty, which I advise you should take time to consider." Requesting to know what they were, Mr. Laurens added, "An honest man requires no time to decide upon his answer in cases where his honour is concerned. If the secretaries of state will enlarge me upon parole, I will solemnly engage to do nothing, directly or indirectly, to the hurt of this kingdom. I will return to America, or remain in any part of England which may be assigned, and surrender myself when demanded." To which his friend replied, "No sir, you must stay in London among your friends. The ministry will often have occasion to send for and consult you. You can write two or three

lines to the ministers, and barely say you are sorry for what is past. A pardon will be granted. Every man has been wrong at some time or other of his life, and should not be ashamed to acknowledge it." Mr. Laurens immediately exclaimed, "I will never subscribe to my own infamy and to the dishonour of my children."

Such newspapers from America as were employed in the publication of British successes, especially in South Carolina, and subsequently to the surrender of its capital, were sent to him for his perusal with an insulting regularity. He was there informed, that his countrymen, refusing to fight in the cause in which they had embarked, were flocking to the enemy for protection and reward, and that the estates of Laurens and other stubborn rebels were under actual sequestration by the British conquerors. But to every such communication Mr. Laurens calmly and characteristically replied, "none of these things move me."

In the year 1781, his eldest son, lieutenant colonel John Laurens, arrived in France, as minister of congress. Mr. Laurens was desired to write to his son, that if he would withdraw himself from that court, it might possibly

obtain his father's release. The reply was—"My son is of age, and has a will of his own. If I should write to him as you request, it would have no effect. He would only conclude that confinement and persuasion had intimidated and overcome me. I know him well. He loves me dearly, and would lay down his life to save mine; but I am sure nothing would tempt him to sacrifice his honour, and I applaud him."

In want of money for immediate purposes, and desirous of drawing a bill of exchange on a merchant in London, and his debtor, he transmitted a pencilled request to the secretaries of state for the use of writing materials. Their lordships received it, but returned no answer, though no provision had been made for his support. Mortified and disappointed, at not being able to maintain himself from his own funds, he was suffered to languish in aggravated confinement, and under a complication of diseases, without the slightest prospect of release or melioration.

When he had been confined a year, a demand was made upon him to pay ninety-seven pounds ten shillings, sterling, to two warders for services in waiting on him. He returned

the following answer, "I will not pay the warders whom I never employed, and whose attendance I shall be glad to dispense with." Three weeks after this, Mr. Laurens received permission from the secretaries of state to have the use of pen and ink for the purpose of drawing a bill of exchange, but they were removed immediately after its execution.

Towards the close of the year 1781, his sufferings, which had by that time become well known, excited the utmost sympathy for himself, but kindled the warmest indignation against the authors of his cruel confinement. Every attempt to draw concessions from this inflexible patriot having proved more than useless, his enlargement was resolved upon, but difficulties arose as to the mode of effecting it. Pursuing the same high-minded course which he had at first adopted, and influenced by the noblest feelings of the heart, he obstinately refused his consent to any act which might imply a confession that he was a British subject, for as such he had been committed on a charge of high treason. It was finally proposed to take bail for his appearance at the court of king's bench, and when the words of the recognizance, "our sovereign lord the king," were read to

Mr. Laurens, he distinctly replied in open court, "not my sovereign !" With this declaration, he, with Messrs. Oswald and Anderson, as his securities, were bound for his appearance at the next court of king's bench for Easter term, and for not departing without leave of the court, upon which he was immediately discharged. When the time appointed for his trial approached, he was not only exonerated from obligation to attend, but solicited by Lord Shelburne to depart for the continent to assist in a scheme for a pacification with America. The idea of being released gratuitously by the British government, sensibly moved him, for he had invariably considered himself as a prisoner of war. Possessed of a lofty sense of personal independence, and unwilling to be brought under the slightest obligation, he thus expressed himself, "I durst not accept myself as a gift; and as congress once offered general Burgoyne for me, I have no doubt of their being now willing to offer earl Cornwallis for the same purpose."

Close confinement in the Tower for more than fourteen months had shattered his constitution, and he was ever afterwards a stranger to good health. As soon as his discharge was

promulgated, he received from congress a commission, appointing him one of their ministers for negotiating a peace with Great Britain. Arrived at Paris, in conjunction with Dr. Franklin, John Adams, and John Jay, he signed the preliminaries of peace on the 30th of November, 1782, by which the independence of the United States was unequivocally acknowledged. Soon after this, Mr. Laurens returned to Carolina. Entirely satisfied with the whole course of his conduct while abroad, it will readily be imagined that his countrymen refused him no distinctions within their power to bestow ; but every solicitation to suffer himself to be elected governor, member of congress, or of the legislature of the state, he positively withstood. When the project of a general convention for revising the federal bond of union, was under consideration, he was chosen, without his knowledge, one of its members, but he refused to serve. Retired from the world and its concerns, he found delight in agricultural experiments, in advancing the welfare of his children and dependants, and in attentions to the interest of his friends and fellow-citizens.

He expired on the 8th of December, 1792, in the sixty-ninth year of his age. His will

concluded with this singular request, which was strictly complied with :—"I solemnly enjoin it upon my son as an indispensable duty, that as soon as he conveniently can after my decease, he cause my body to be wrapped in twelve yards of tow cloth, and burnt until it be entirely consumed ; and then collecting my bones, deposit them wherever he may see proper."

Mr. Laurens had four children, two sons and two daughters. One of them married the late celebrated Dr. Ramsay ; the other, Mr. Charles Pinckney. One of the sons, Colonel John Laurens, died early in life ; the other, Mr. Henry Laurens, resided for many years in Charleston, South Carolina.

## ROBERT MORRIS.

THE paths to renown are as numerous and diversified as the shades of human character and the ramifications of human genius. Over mountains crimsoned with slaughter, and through vallies scared with desolation, is marked the warrior's course: the poet's way winds amidst groves of changeless verdure and inspiring shade, along dells carpeted with spontaneous flowers, and among all the gorgeous but unsubstantial architecture of imagination: deeper, thornier, and more dark is the historian's crooked road, through labyrinths of mouldering lore, which the glance of truth can scarcely penetrate, surrounded with the shadows and clouds of obscuring traditions, which impede his progress, and render its termination unsure: in the very bosom of nature the philosopher's orbit appears, insinuating itself into the mysterious coil of creation: the path of the orator skims the graceful sphere of science, explores all the rich empire of the arts, wanders amidst the enchanted dominion



of fancy, and unreservedly plucks the fruits and the blossoms which invite him to plunder at every step: while the statesman's more elevated and dangerous causeway, bounded by temptations alluring to destroy, lifts its traveller into the native region of wealth and influence, where the enmity of vicious nature, and the hostility of party rancour are watchful to detect his errors, and to hurl him, should he swerve from rectitude, into the dark gulf of ignominy which opens at his feet.

Each of these roads, however, has its subordinate branches, the description of which, in this place, is neither necessary nor desirable. To connect this exordium with the character we now present, it is merely requisite to notice that division of political fame which runs into the intricacies of national finance. If this be a department which demands no dazzling superiority of natural ability, which calls for no extraordinary extensiveness of artificial knowledge, it brings into action the nobler acquisitions of a wakeful prudence and an inflexible integrity; and by their united operation, gives solidity and duration to the credit and prosperity of a people. Here the civic wreath decreed for useful services, and the

edifice of public wealth and reputation they have contributed to erect, may be allowed to stand in honourable competition with the more gaudy laurels of genius, and the frailer homage of a fastidious and inconstant taste.

Such is the chaplet with which impartial history will invest the brow of *Robert Morris*. This eminent financier was born at Liverpool, on the 20th day of January, (O. S.) 1733-4. Of his family very little is known, except that his father was a respectable English merchant; and, for a long time, held the agency of a very considerable tobacco house in that wealthy and enterprizing town. The nature and extent of his concerns required his frequent visits to this country, and it was in one of these trips that his son Robert, at the age of thirteen, became the companion of his voyage, and received an introduction to the scene of his future greatness. The rudiments of his education he had previously obtained in England; but, with a view to render it complete, his father, immediately on his arrival, placed him under the tuition of the Rev. Mr. Gordon of Maryland, who was well qualified to finish the mould of the youthful mind.

That nature had bestowed on Robert a

liberal capacity of mind, the circumstances of his maturer life sufficiently prove: to give effect to her bounty, education went no further than his endowment with the materials which might enable him to fill the character of a merchant. Had a more considerable allotment of his early years been devoted to the cultivation of polite literature and the sciences, he would, most undoubtedly, have become a very distinguished scholar; yet, as was well remarked by one of his bosom friends, "it is doubtful whether he would have become a better or a greater man:—he *might* have been more useful, but it is probable that this rare intellect would have been expended on the mere frivolities of learning, which was afterwards destined to rear the moral edifice of a nation." And it is reasonable to conclude, that his acquaintance with the various branches of learning would have been more extensive, but for the melancholy catastrophe which, by rendering him an orphan, effectually interrupted the course of his studies, and cast him upon a sphere, where his unripened energies were to be called into premature employment. The circumstances of this fatal event are too inter-

esting, as well as too nearly connected with this history, to be omitted.

About two years had elapsed since his father's establishment in this country as a merchant, during which period he had gained greatly on the love and respect of those who knew him. On the fatal morning he had received information of the arrival in the Delaware, of a ship from Liverpool, consigned to himself: he immediately went on board, and having made the necessary inquiries and arrangements, left the vessel to return to the shore. At this moment, just as he had reached the boat, the captain, as a tribute of particular respect to his visitor, ordered a gun to be fired—it was the flattery of death;—the wadding of the gun lodged in his shoulder; and, notwithstanding the promptest and most able exertions of medical skill, a mortification took place, which, in a few days, terminated his existence, leaving Robert, in his fifteenth year, fatherless.

This lamentable event, in a subsequent part of his son's life, was forcibly recalled to his memory, during a season of festive enjoyment; and, although the introduction of the anecdote in this place is chronologically incorrect, it

might be difficult to find a more apt opportunity, In the zenith of his mercantile fame, a friend had presented him with a fine turtle. Unwilling to incur the trouble of dressing it at home, Mr. Morris sent it to a celebrated refectory a few miles from the city, on the banks of the Schuylkill, and invited thither a large party of ladies and gentleman to partake of his hospitality. Festivity was at its height; every countenance was clothed in smiles; when suddenly the cheeks of the lively host grew pale; his gaiety forsook him, and every attempt to rally his paralyzed spirits was ineffectual. A general anxiety to discover the cause of this change was evident through the whole circle; yet a restraining delicacy prevented a too minute inquiry: until, at length, Mr. Morris himself, taking one of the company aside, addressed him thus:—"A circumstance has occurred which has greatly affected me. I am at this moment informed that the man who killed my father is in this house." The association of ideas produced by this accident was too powerful to be subdued: adding, to the information of the cause of his distress, a request that his friend would apologize for his

weakness, he retired from a scene, the cheerfulness of which was now become irksome, and its mirth a scene of intolerable anguish.

Remote from his native land, and deprived of his natural protector, whatever was the strength and elasticity of Robert's mind, misfortune seemed to have received a charter to break its energies, and destroy its anticipations. The dark uncertainty which hung over his path, the consequence of past, and the probable prelude to future adversities, would have cramped, if not wholly destroyed, an ordinary ambition; but his was not the ardour of chance, nor the aspiration of circumstances: he felt his own vigorousness of spirit, and relied upon it for ultimate success.

Soon after the death of his father, Robert was received into the counting house of Charles Willing, Esq., at that time the most distinguished merchant in Philadelphia, to whom he appears to have been indentured, and, after remaining in this subordinate station the usual term of years, he was established in business by his patron, in conjunction with his son Thomas Willing, Esq. Embarked in an extensive and profitable West India trade, he made

several voyages, as supercargo in the ships belonging to the company, in one of which he was unfortunately captured by the French, and, during a close imprisonment for some time, suffered cruelty of treatment, not to be justified by the laws of war, nor the usages of civilized nations. In this state of distress, without a shilling, by exercising his ingenuity, and repairing the watch of a Frenchman, he raised the means of his own liberation, and enabled himself to return to Philadelphia, to resume the mercantile station from which he had been torn.

Under his active superintendence, the house of Willing and Morris rapidly rose to the summit of commercial reputation. Their foreign freightage employed an incredible number of ships ; while the management of their finances at home, marked with a regularity and an integrity which could not be surpassed, procured them the confidence and credit of the world. Business was pleasure to Mr. Morris, yet it encroached not upon the sphere of social cheerfulness; the simple and admirable arrangements of his counting house, leaving him sufficient time to indulge his inclination for the

enjoyment of his friends, to whom he attached himself with all the ardour and sincerity of a generous and ingenuous mind.

Did the limits of this biographical sketch allow of such amplification, it would be easy to detail instances in proof of the solidity of his friendships; but, as the proper end of this brief portraiture will be best obtained by a summary of his political life, a single reference to such facts must suffice. A gentleman of the Jewish persuasion, who had lived on terms of intimacy with him, fell into sudden embarrassments, and became greatly distressed. As soon as Mr. Morris was acquainted with the matter, he advised an immediate removal to Baltimore, for the purpose of attempting to retrieve his broken fortunes; at the same time, placing in his hands five hundred pounds, with a written agreement never to demand its repayment, and taking, as a nominal security, the personal bond of the party obliged: to this sum, he subsequently added another 500*l.* neither of which loans was ever repaid him,

About the year 1769, he renounced the unnatural solitude of bachelorship, and intermarried with Mary, the daughter of Colonel



White, and sister of the late learned bishop of that name. She was elegant, accomplished, and rich, and, in every respect, qualified to carry the felicity of connubial life to its highest perfection.

The objects and employments of Mr. Morris' life, for some years after this change in his domestic character, were entirely of a commercial nature. On the appearance of a rupture with the British government, however, he was sent to congress, as member for Pennsylvania, at the close of the year 1775; and, during that session, was employed in some financial arrangements of the greatest importance to the operations of the army and navy.

During the march of the British troops through the Jerseys, in 1776, the removal of congress to Baltimore is well known. For reasons of a commercial nature, Mr. Morris was left at Philadelphia, to remain as long as circumstances would permit. At this crisis, a letter from the commander in chief was received by the government, announcing, that while the enemy were accurately informed of all his movements, he was compelled, from the want of hard money to remain in complete

ignorance of their arrangements, and requiring a certain sum as absolutely necessary to the safety of the army. Information of this demand was sent to Mr. Morris, in the hope that, through his credit, the money might be obtained ; the communication reached him at his office, in his way from which to his dwelling-house, immediately afterwards, he was met by a gentleman of the society of Friends, with whom he was in habits of business and acquaintance, and who accosted him with his customary phrase — “ Well, Robert, what news ? ” — “ The news is,” said Mr. Morris — “ that I am in immediate want of a sum of hard money,” mentioning the amount, “ and that you are the man who must procure it for me. Your security is to be my note of hand and my honour.” After a short hesitation, the gentleman replied — “ Robert, thou shalt have it ;” and, by the punctual performance of his promise, enabled congress to comply with the requisition of the general.

The situation of general Greene, in South Carolina, was equally critical, his distresses rendering it scarcely practicable to keep his troops together, when a gentleman, Mr. Hall

of that state, by stepping forward, and advancing the necessary sums, enabled him to stem the danger. On the return of general Greene to Philadelphia, after the war had terminated, he repaired to the office of finance to settle his accounts, when the secret was divulged, that Mr. Hall had acted under the direction of Mr. Morris. The general was hurt at such an apparent want of confidence in him; but, on re-considering the subject, at the request of the financier, he admitted the wisdom of the caution which had been used,—“I give you my opinion,” said he, “that you never did a wiser thing: for, on other occasions, I was sufficiently distressed to have warranted my drawing on you, had I known that I might have done so, and I should have availed myself of the privilege.” Mr. Morris rejoined, that, even as matters had been conducted, the southern expedition had gone nearer than the operations in any other quarter, to the causing an arrest of his commercial business.

By a resolution of congress, the office of financier was established in 1781, and Mr. Morris was unanimously elected as the superintendent. Previous to this election, he had

formed a mercantile connection with I. and R. Hazlehurst, and his fear lest the duties of an official situation of such importance should interfere with his engagements in business, prevented his acceptance of office, until congress had specifically resolved, that his fulfilment of his commercial obligations was not incompatible with the performance of the public services required of him.

To trace him through all the acts of his financial administration, would be to make this biography a history of the last two years of the revolutionary war. When the exhausted credit of the government threatened the most alarming consequences; when the soldiers were utterly destitute of the necessary supplies of food and clothing; when the military chest had been drained of its last dollar; and even the intrepid confidence of Washington was shaken; upon his own credit, and, from his own private resources, did Mr. Morris furnish those pecuniary means, but for which the physical energies of the country, exerted to their utmost, would have been scarcely competent to secure that prompt and glorious issue which ensued.

One of the first acts of his financial government was the proposition to congress of his plan for the establishment of the bank of North America, which was chartered forthwith, and opened on the 7th of January, 1782. At this time "the States were half a million of dollars in debt on that year's taxes, which had been raised by anticipation, on that system of credit which Mr. Morris had created:" and, but for this establishment, his plans of finance must have been entirely frustrated. On his retirement from office, it was affirmed, by two of the Massachusetts delegates, that "it cost congress at the rate of eighteen millions per annum, hard dollars, to carry on the war, till he was chosen financier, and then it cost them but about five millions!"

By the representations of a committee of congress, Mr. Morris was induced to abandon his intention of quitting office in 1783, and he accordingly continued to superintend the department of finance to the 30th September, 1784, when, in a letter to the commissioners of the treasury board, he resigned his office, and immediately issued an advertisement, pledging himself to the payment of all his out-

standing notes, as they should arrive at maturity.

In 1786, he was elected a member of the convention which framed the federal constitution. No man had more often and severely felt the want of an efficient government. He had incessantly asked for a stronger bond, or instrument, than the old confederation, for "a firm, wise, manly system of federal government;" and he strenuously cooperated in devising and recommending the present. In 1788, the general assembly of Pennsylvania appointed him to represent the state in the first senate of the United States, which assembled at New York. As a member of that body he distinguished himself by wise counsels, and particularly by an irresistible speech for the repeal of the tender laws.

Fatigued with political cares, which, from the time of his election to a seat in the senate of the first congress, under the federal constitution, had so completely engrossed his mind, he was now anxious to retire to the relaxation of private life. That he was not avaricious after influence, may be sufficiently established from the fact of his refusal to accept the situation of

secretary of the treasury, which general Washington wished him to fill. On his being requested to name a gentleman for that office, he nominated Colonel Hamilton ; and, on the expression of some surprise by the general, who was not acquainted with the colonel's qualifications in that department, Mr. Morris decidedly declared his own knowledge of his entire competency, and he was accordingly elected to that important post.

That his long continuance in the public service, and his unremitted attention to the business of his country, had caused some confusion in his private affairs, he assigned as a reason for declining to comply with the solicitations of the city of Philadelphia, which had sent a delegation to request he would become its representative in congress. It is true, indeed, that he was subsequently induced to resume his situation as a delegate from Pennsylvania, and that he continued to fill this distinguished character, for several years after his retirement from the financial department ; but it is equally true, that this compliance with the public wish was rather the effect of a powerful sense of political duty, than of inclination. His long

inattention to his private affairs was productive of great embarrassments of mind and circumstances, the results of which cast a shade over those declining years which unembarrassed repose and honourable affluence ought to have soothed and cherished.

In his old age, Mr. Morris embarked in vast land speculations, which proved fatal to his fortune. The man to whose financial operations the Americans were said to owe as much as to the negotiations of Franklin, or even the arms of Washington, passed the latter years of his life in prison, confined for debt.

After a life of inestimable utility, Mr. Morris died in Philadelphia, on the 8th of May, 1806, in the 73d year of his age. That his arrangements for the raising of pecuniary supplies, and the support of the credit of his country, in her greatest need, essentially conduced to the glorious termination of the contest for liberty, is established by the evidence of the illustrious Washington himself: and it may be as truly said of him, as it was of the Roman Curtius, that he sacrificed himself for the safety of the commonwealth.

Mr. Morris was of large frame, with a fine,



open, bland countenance, and simple manners. Until the period of his impoverishment, his house was a scene of the most liberal hospitality. It was open, for nearly half a century, to all the strangers of good society who visited Philadelphia. He was temperate in food, but fond of social meetings. No one parted with his money more freely for public or private purposes of a meritorious nature.

His expansive faculties, his habits of order, his energy and rigid justice in the transaction of business, enabled him to acquit himself creditably in his financial sphere, his extensive commercial and private correspondence with Great Britain and the continent, furnished him with early and important political information. His constant manifestations of confidence in the issue of the revolutionary struggle inspired many others with the same sentiment. His whole example did incalculable service.

His general situation, and the impossibility of relieving all the wants which were referred to his department, exposed him to slanderous charges and harsh suspicions, which have in no instance withstood a fair inquiry.

Mr. Morris was a fluent, correct, and impressive orator ; he wrote with ease and tenderness ; his fund of political knowledge could not but be ample ; his acquaintance with the affairs of the world exceeded in extent and diversity, that of any of his fellow patriots, Franklin excepted ; and his conversation was therefore replete with interest and instruction.

## THOMAS EDDY.

THE character of Mr. Eddy as a merchant and a man induces us to lay it at this time before our readers. Connected as he was with those great projects for ameliorating the moral and physical condition of New York, the Erie canal, and the penitentiary system, and exhibiting the pure example of a spotless life, as well as a model of commercial integrity, it is believed that a short account of one who occupied so prominent and useful a position in the history of his country will be peculiarly acceptable to that portion of the present generation who now throng the busy marts of trade and commerce. That noble charity, the New York Hospital, stands a monument of the liberal, warm, and active spirit, which glowed in all his actions, through a long and varied life. The philanthropist Howard was his beacon light ; and emulating the example of that good man, he devoted himself, body and soul, to the mitigation of human misery, in whatever shape it assumed. Such, indeed, were his virtues,

that he received by general consent the appellation of the "HOWARD OF AMERICA."

Thomas Eddy was born in Philadelphia on the 5th of September, 1758. His parents were from Ireland, and had emigrated about five years before. They belonged to the Society of Friends. His father was engaged in the shipping business until 1766, when he went into that of the hardware; in which he continued until his death, which occurred in the latter part of the same year. Mrs. Eddy, with a large family of children, continued the business for a number of years after her husband's death, when she removed to Bucks county. On account of the disordered state of the times, seminaries of learning were few and badly conducted, and the scholastic acquisitions of young Eddy at the age of thirteen were comprised within narrow limits. "All the learning," he says, in a short memoir of himself, "all the learning I acquired was reading, writing, and arithmetic as far as vulgar fractions. As to grammar, I could repeat some of the definitions by rote, but was totally ignorant of its principles." At the age we have referred to, he was apprenticed to a Mr. Hoskins, of Burlington, N. J., to learn the tanning business, but some

misunderstanding having occurred with his employer, he remained but two years with him.

An acquaintance formed in his sixteenth year with a young man named William Savary, seems to have given such an impulse to his moral virtues as remained through life, and gave birth to the line of conduct which has since made him conspicuous among the few who are really good. He pays a rich compliment to this friend of his early years :—

“Of William Savary, it would be difficult for me to say too much. No two persons could entertain a more near and tender regard and affection for each other than always subsisted between us. He was a man of uncommonly strong mind, and good understanding. When about twenty-five years of age, he became a minister, and perhaps there never was one more highly esteemed and beloved. He was admired by all classes, and openly opposed to every thing in the least marked with bigotry or superstition. As a preacher, he was in the first rank. His manner of delivery was pleasing and solemn, his mind was cultivated and improved, and he was uncommonly liberal in his sentiments towards those of other socie-

ties. I have often thought there never was so nearly perfect a character within my knowledge, in our society, and none that more extensively inculcated and effectually diffused true, practical, christian principles."

Upon the evacuation of Philadelphia by the British, Mr. Eddy went to New York, shortly after his brother Charles had sailed for England. He arrived in this city on the 4th of September, 1779, with the sum of ninety-six dollars. Totally ignorant of any kind of business, and with a slender education, he struggled hard to defray his necessary expenses. In the memoir to which we have referred, and from which we make liberal extracts, he says : — "I took board with William Backhouse, in the house now occupied by Daniel McCormick in Wall street, at the rate of eight dollars per week, besides having to pay one dollar weekly for washing ; Samuel Elain, late of Newport, deceased, John I. Glover, and two or three other respectable merchants, boarded at the same house ; becoming acquainted with them was highly useful to me, as it was the first opportunity I ever had of acquiring a knowledge of commerce, and the course of mercantile dealing. I knew that it was out of my power

to support myself with what I then possessed, and that I must soon come to want, unless I could succeed in business. The first thing to which my attention was turned, was daily to attend auctions at the Coffee House, and being sensible of my own ignorance, I endeavoured by every means in my power to acquire information, carefully inquiring of others the names of articles exposed for public sale, as it often happened that I was not even acquainted with the names of many of them. I then inquired their value, and advised with some persons previous to purchasing ; sometimes, on noticing an article intended to be sold by auction, I would procure a sample, and call on some dealer in the article, and get them to offer me a fixed price on my furnishing it : in this way, by first ascertaining where I could dispose of the goods, I would purchase, provided the price would afford me a profit. On this plan I have found a purchaser for goods, bought and delivered them, and received the money, which enabled me to pay the auctioneer the cost of them, without my advancing one shilling. I was obliged to live by my wits, and this necessity was of great use to me afterwards. Some months after my arrival at New York, my

brother Charles arrived from Ireland, and brought with him, on account of merchants there, provisions, linens, &c., shipped from Dublin, Cork, Belfast, and other ports. He returned to Europe in 1780, previous to which we formed a copartnership with Benjamin Sykes, under the firm of Eddy, Sykes & Co.

“This firm prosecuted business mostly in consignments from England and Ireland, and some shipping business. My partner was a good-natured, honest Englishman, but not possessed of a very intelligent, active mind; in consequence of this, the management and contrivance of the business fell to my lot, and, though very young, and without experience, I had to write all the letters, and carry on every kind of correspondence, besides mostly making all the purchases and sales. By every packet we had to write twenty or thirty letters to England and Ireland, and to accomplish this, had frequently to sit writing till twelve or one o'clock in the morning. I was sedulously and actively employed in business, and in this way acquired considerable knowledge of commercial affairs. Our concerns were extensive, and were prosecuted with tolerable success, respectability, and reputation. My brother



George was, at this time, in Philadelphia, about eighteen years of age. He possessed a remarkably sensible and comprehensive mind. Although he had no knowledge of business, he was full of enterprise. By him, in Philadelphia, and by Eddy, Sykes & Co. in New York, an arrangement was made, with the consent of General Washington, to supply the British and foreign troops with money, who were taken with Lord Cornwallis at Yorktown. The money was raised by my brother at Philadelphia, drawing on us at New York, and the moneys thus raised were paid to the Paymaster of the British and foreign troops, prisoners at Lancaster, Pennsylvania, for which he received and sent to Eddy, Sykes & Co. that paymaster's drafts on the Paymaster General at New York. By an agreement made with Sir Henry Clinton, the British commander, we were paid six per cent. commission. The whole amount paid amounted to a very large sum, and proved a profitable contract."

On his arrival at New York he renewed an intimacy previously formed in Philadelphia with Miss Hannah Hartshorne, for whom he entertained a tender and warm affection. His attachment was reciprocated, and they were

united in 1782, at the Old Meeting House, in Liberty street.

Before the Americans re-entered the city of New York, Mr. Eddy removed to Philadelphia, where he formed a mercantile connection with his brother George. Charles had settled in Europe, and was prosecuting business there on his own account. In January, 1784, Thomas went to Virginia for the purpose of making purchases of tobacco and shipping it to England. During the revolutionary war, tobacco, in Europe, sold at a very extravagant price; and for a year after peace was declared, great quantities were shipped, thus causing the market to be so overstocked, and the price so reduced, that immense sums were lost by the shippers. Thomas and George Eddy were included among those engaged in this unfortunate speculation. About this time the ill effects of a large importation of European goods, cut off by the war, began to be felt. The country was inundated with extensive shipments; remittances were difficult to be made; and, consequently, a great many houses, both here and in London, became bankrupt. Charles had supplied Thomas and George Eddy with goods on credit to a large amount,

and they in turn had given extensive credits to their customers. The failure of the former in London expedited that of the latter. They were relieved from their embarrassments under a general act of bankruptcy for the state of Pennsylvania. To the honour, however, of Mr. Eddy's unswerving business integrity, be it said, that every farthing of the pecuniary responsibilities of the firm have since been discharged, except some few that were not legal, and which it was not deemed right to pay.

Anxious to re-establish himself in some kind of business, Mr. Eddy made a voyage to England, where he remained three months ; but this proved of no advantage to him. On his return, he again settled in New York, and being assisted by the kindness of Robert Browne and others, he commenced the occupation of an insurance broker. There were none engaged in this business at that time, and his gains were consequently rapid. "About 1792," he says, "the public debt of the United States was funded ; this afforded an opportunity for people to speculate in the public funds. In this business I made a good deal of money. I declined acting as an insurance broker, and did considerable business as an underwriter, in

which I was successful. In 1793, or 1794, I was elected a director in the Mutual Insurance Company, and soon after a director in the Western Inland Lock Navigation Company, and in 1797, was appointed treasurer of that company."

From early youth Mr. Eddy evinced an uncommon zeal in every project for the amelioration of the human race. It is, unfortunately, one of the prominent traits of mankind to be selfish, and society would present but a bleak and barren aspect were it not for the inspiration of a FEW who seem to be elected to breathe into the world the spirit of Christianity; men who, forgetful of self, nobly exert themselves as ministering angels to supply the wants and alleviate the sufferings of the victims of disease, poverty, persecution, ignorance, and crime. "Promiscuous charity," eloquently observes a distinguished writer, "has been practised by the kind-hearted and the wealthy in every age and nation. The benevolent have poured the oil and wine into the wounds of the unfortunate, to assuage their anguish, if they could not heal them; they have fed the hungry and clothed the naked, and in so doing, have received their reward in the blessings of the just. The

Saviour of the world declared that, inasmuch as this was done to one of the children of misfortune, it was done unto himself. But, notwithstanding this generous current of philanthropy has been flowing in the hearts of the virtuous, in all nations, since the birth of man, yet it was left for a late age to collect facts relative to human misery, and from these to form a system for permanent relief." Such was the end and aim of Mr. Eddy's long and useful life. He was directly instrumental in the establishment of many of those institutions which are now the pride and ornaments of our state, and eloquent monuments to the memory of him who effected their being. We propose to enumerate briefly the leading events of Mr. Eddy's life, which was almost exclusively devoted to the public good, and the great works in which he was engaged.

One of the first projects which engaged Mr. Eddy's mind, was a change in the penal code of this state. Branding, whipping-posts, pillories, and solitary confinement without the relief of labour, were the means of reformation in that day ; and men were made to believe that the world should be governed with a rod of iron. Mr. Eddy's soul, in emulation of his

sect in Pennsylvania, revolted at the recognition of such a principle. That state, through the efforts of the Friends, had effected a change in the mode of punishing crime. There was a warm desire in Mr. Eddy's breast to bring a similar plan into operation in this state. He accordingly, in the year 1796, engaged in that work with General Philip Schuyler and Ambrose Spencer, then influential members of the senate, and the latter, since Chief Justice of the State of New York. With the assistance of Mr. Eddy, a bill was drawn up for establishing a penitentiary system, and both gentlemen made eloquent speeches in its favour. The legislature were soon convinced of the utility and practicability of the measure, and it was passed. Five persons, among whom was Mr. Eddy, were appointed as commissioners for carrying the bill into effect, and to erect a suitable prison, the building of which was by general consent intrusted solely to him ; and when it was finished, such was the interest which he took in its success, that he consented to serve as its director and agent, in which capacities he continued for more than four years. He was so assiduous and calculating in his duties, that every anticipation of his friends and of

himself was more than realized. The expenses of the establishment had been less than were expected, the health of the prisoners better than that of the free and honest citizens in the ordinary walks of life. Such cleanliness, order, and moral discipline, marked the penitentiary system under the administration of this untired philanthropist, that those formerly dissipated and sickly, were made sober and healthy. He watched the results of his plans, and held to a theory no longer than he found it good in practice.

In 1801, Mr. Eddy published his celebrated volume on the State Prison of New York, one of the most admirable papers which has been written before or since on the topics of which it treats, viz. : causes of crime, punishments, reformation, prison discipline, &c. No one had studied the subject more thoroughly, or was better versed in its principles ; and the work shows him to have been well acquainted with the writings of Beccaria, Montesquieu, Howard, Penn, and others.

While in the management of the New York prison, Mr. Eddy found that the plan of erecting and conducting such establishments was susceptible of a great improvement, and to him

belongs the merit of inventing and introducing a valuable feature which has been adopted in most of the states. We allude to the confinement of convicts in separate cells during the night. He found, from careful observation, that several confined in a cell corrupted each other, for each one told to his companions his career of vice, and all joined by sympathetic villany to keep each other in countenance. This, to the eye of the shrewd philanthropist, was not long concealed; and like a man of moral intrepidity, he avowed his error and condemned it. Through his exertions a bill was passed by the legislature, making it optional on the part of the city and county of New York, to construct a prison with solitary cells. But not being made imperative, although it was approved by Mr. Eddy's friends and the public generally, yet the new plan was not immediately introduced into this country; Mr. Eddy was, however, not discouraged. At that time, he reckoned among his correspondents on the other side of the Atlantic, such men as Roscoe, Colquhoun, Bentham, and Murray. He immediately wrote to Mr. Colquhoun, mentioning his plan. The letter was shown to Lord Sidmouth, then minister for the Home Department,



who, as well as Mr. Colquhoun, gave his decided approbation of the plan, and wished it should be introduced into England; and this was done by the London Society for improving Prison Discipline, and one or two prisons were soon after built upon this plan, one near London, containing six or seven hundred cells. A prison was also built at Pittsburgh, in Pennsylvania, upon this construction, containing from five to six hundred cells. When the Auburn state prison was erected, Mr. Eddy urged them to have the buildings wholly divided into cells, seven by nine feet each, but most of the commissioners were afraid to try the experiment fully, but did it only in part, and this change from the old plan was made from their confidence in the judgment of the adviser.

When Messrs. Tibbetts, Allen, and Hopkins made their report to the legislature on the prisons in 1824, the object of their appointment being to inquire into the expediency of abolishing the penitentiaries, which had become somewhat unpopular from bad management, they reported in favour of the excellence of the system recommended twenty-two years before by Mr. Eddy, and the result has been its extension

not only in New York, but in almost every state of the Union.

To Mr. Eddy's energies in favour of the New York Hospital, is perhaps owing its usefulness at this day. That institution was established before the revolution, by philanthropic individuals on this and the other side of the water. The great event which changed the political destiny of our country, paralyzed the spirit which gave vigour to the institution to which we allude. Mr. Eddy was elected one of its governors in 1793, and through his active exertions, the legislature was induced to make liberal grants to support and extend its means of benevolence. Mr. Eddy's attention was also directed to the establishment of a department for the treatment of lunatic patients. He visited Albany in 1815, and in conjunction with one or two influential members of the legislature, procured the passage of an act appropriating ten thousand dollars a year for the support of the insane, and for erecting new buildings. To this cause we owe that noble institution, the Asylum for the Insane, at Bloomingdale. These successes in the cause of philanthropy, afforded Mr. Eddy the liveliest pleasure.

In 1793, Mr. Eddy and John Murray, brother

to Lindley Murray, were appointed a committee of the Friends' yearly meeting, for the improvement of the Indians, whose reduced and wretched condition attracted the notice of the benevolent. They accordingly made a visit to the miserable remnants of the Six nations—the Brothertown, Stockbridge, Oneida, and Onondaga Indians, for the purpose of inquiring into the best method of alleviating their condition. Their report was so favourable that large sums of money were raised and expended for the amelioration of these tribes. While Mr. Eddy was among them, he was excessively beloved: his hospitable mansion was a wigwam to the travelling Indian, where he ate when famished, and drank when thirsty. He and the famous Red Jacket were strong friends; for they were both philosophers and philanthropists, although the latter was of a somewhat sterner mould. Mr. Eddy laboured hard to suppress those habits of intemperance, which are working their destruction.

Among his other efforts to promote the public prosperity, Mr. Eddy possesses a just claim to a share in investing New York with the benefits of inland navigation by means of the great Erie Canal, the interests of which were so greatly forwarded by the immortal Clinton.

Doctor Hosack, in his memoir of that great man, assigns Mr. Eddy a place next to him, as being "chiefly instrumental in effecting a direct internal communication between Lake Erie and the Atlantic." He was at an early period one of the directors of the Western Inland Navigation Company, which had for its object the improvement of the communication between the eastern and western portions of the state. The company expended large sums on the navigation of the Mohawk, which impoverished it; and Mr. Eddy, in his capacity of director, made frequent exploring visits to the interior of New York, to ascertain the practicability of constructing a canal, and unsuccessfully importuned the company to undertake the project of canal navigation. Being at Albany in 1810, he conceived the project of applying to the legislature for the appointment of commissioners to examine and explore the western part of the state, with a view to the construction of a canal from the Mohawk to Seneca Lake. Mentioning his plan to his friend, Judge Platt, then a senator, and since a justice of the Supreme Court, it was highly approved of, and that eminent man suggested the plan of a canal from the Hudson to Lake Erie. A bill was immediately

drafted to appoint a commission for this purpose, and it was resolved to present it the next day. Names were selected equally from the two political parties, to be appointed as commissioners. They comprised those of GOUVERNEUR MORRIS, DE WITT CLINTON, STEPHEN VAN RENSSELAER, SIMEON DE WITT, WILLIAM NORTH, THOMAS EDDY, and PETER B. PORTER. These arrangements were fully perfected by both houses passing the bill immediately, and without a dissenting voice. In the following summer, the commissioners made their exploration from one end of the state to the other, and reported to the next legislature, and several laws were enacted favourable to the prosecution of the project. The last war, however, interrupted the proceedings; and, besides, the plan was violently opposed on party considerations, while there were many who doubted the pecuniary ability of the state to carry on so stupendous a work. Notwithstanding the furious opposition the project met with, Mr. Eddy was not willing to resign a favourite scheme, and he determined to make one more effort. Judge Platt being in New York in 1815, holding a court, Mr. Eddy proposed to him to call a public meeting, in order to urge

the propriety and policy of offering a memorial to the legislature, pressing them to prosecute the canal from Erie to the Hudson. Judge Platt readily agreed to this proposition, and consented to open the business to the meeting, if one could be obtained. He then called on De Witt Clinton, who united with him in adopting measures to procure a public meeting. Accordingly, a large and respectable meeting was held at the City Hotel. William Bayard was chairman. Judge Platt made an introductory speech, and was followed by De Witt Clinton, John Swartwout, and others. Cadwallader D. Colden, De Witt Clinton, John Swartwout, and Mr. Eddy, were appointed a committee to draft a memorial to the legislature. This memorial was drawn up by De Witt Clinton, and from the masterly manner in which it was written, it was evident he had a complete knowledge of the subject, and evinced the uncommon talents of the author. It was signed by many thousands in the city, and throughout the state. With the legislature it had the desired effect, and was the means of establishing the canal policy on a firm basis, and producing the law of 15th of April, 1817, directing the work to be commenced, which

was accordingly done on the 4th of July following.

In the interim, Mr. Eddy evinced the unusual forecast of his mind, and his clear judgment, by his exertions, in connection with De Witt Clinton and Robert Fulton, to the opposition caused by men not capable of forming a correct judgment as to the practicability of the great work. This was done by the publication of pamphlets, essays in newspapers, &c.

The first savings bank in this country was established in the city of Philadelphia, and almost at the same time another at Boston. Mr. Eddy, impressed with the utility of these institutions to industrious persons with small means, saw only another plan of giving scope to that active spirit of philanthropy which fired his soul. His exertions to establish such an institution in New York, failed for a long time to receive competent support. In 1803, however, in company with John Murray, Jr., and Jeremiah Thompson, he met with full success, after triumphantly removing every objection. The New York Savings Bank was thus established, and has remained in full and active operation ever since; and the thousands who have been benefitted by its good offices, can

attest the value of such an institution. Mr. Eddy was a director, and its vice-president, to the time of his death.

The New York Bible Society is also another monument of Mr. Eddy's ardent desire to improve the condition of mankind. This branch of the great society which has directly and indirectly effected so much good to the human race, even to the uttermost parts of the earth, was formed in 1806, only two years after the birth of its parent in London. Who can estimate the vast amount of intellectual and moral happiness conferred on a large proportion of mankind, who would otherwise have remained in hopeless darkness, by the introduction of the benign principles of Christianity and its necessary companions, civilization and refinement? The latest moment of Mr. Eddy's life found him an efficient and active supporter of the society he had aided in establishing.

In his connection with the prison system of this state, Mr. Eddy had occasion to observe the full force of the axiom that "ignorance is the mother of crime." He therefore directed his efforts to the establishment of a free school, for those children not otherwise provided with the means of education. An act of incorpora-



tion was obtained for a society for establishing a seminary of this description. Funds were raised by subscription for carrying out this benevolent project, and in a short time great benefits flowed from its operations. From this small beginning has grown the great and splendid system of public instruction which is as honourable to New York as it has been advantageous to her citizens in every walk of life.

We might go on enumerating severally, and descanting on the various public acts of the life of the subject of this memoir, for there was scarcely a plan started within the scope of this truly good man that had in view the public benefit, which may not boast of his active exertions in its favour; but we have displayed sufficient of his actions to show that the predominant impulse which inspired him, was philanthropy. His intellectual acquirements, though by no means brilliant, were sufficient to enable him to shine in the great moral works to which he devoted himself, and the literary compositions he has left behind, show him to have been possessed of a strong and discriminating mind. Mild, courteous, and dignified in his personal demeanor, he insured the love and respect of all around him.

Mr. Eddy's death occurred on the 16th of September, 1827, in the sixty-ninth year of his age. He had been failing for months, but at last his exit from the busy scenes of life was as sudden as that life had been tranquil. His memory will long be revered and cherished by those who are capable of appreciating true worth and excellence.\*

\* The foregoing Biography was contributed to the Merchants' Magazine by Mr. James C. Watts.

## JOHN HANCOCK.

IF there is a name upon the page of American history, which should be cherished by our merchants with a warmer love and a deeper veneration than any other, it is that of JOHN HANCOCK. His memory should be their pride, for he was one of them ; and among the many distinguished men of his time, the annals of our country boast of none more noble or patriotic. It will be our aim in this notice to give, in a condensed form, a few of the most striking periods of his life, that his disinterested character may serve as a model for imitation.

John Hancock was born in 1737, at Quincy, near Boston, in the then province of Massachusetts Bay. His father was a clergyman—learned, eloquent, and influential—beloved by all who knew him, and admired and revered for his noble liberality in patronising and sustaining the literary institutions of his native land. He died during the infancy of his son, who was then placed under the care and protection of his paternal uncle, an individual

who, from an humble condition of fortune, became the most eminent merchant in New England, and was for many years a member of the provincial council. He bestowed the utmost attention upon the education of his nephew, who was graduated at Harvard College, in 1754, and immediately entered the counting house of his uncle. There he remained until 1760, when he visited England ; and soon after his return his kinsman and patron died, leaving him, at the age of twenty-seven, with a larger fortune than was possessed by any other individual in the province. The appearance of Mr. Hancock was extremely prepossessing. His person was handsome, his countenance expressive and highly intellectual, and his manners were naturally graceful. His mind had been richly cultivated, and was endowed with sentiments of a lofty and refined character. He was passionately fond of society, and intimately versed in the elegant accomplishments of his time. Possessed of so many natural advantages, combined with superior acquirements, and a generous liberality where pecuniary interests were concerned, he soon became exceedingly popular ; and when to all his other qualities we add that of eloquence,

which he possessed to an unusual degree, it is not surprising that in a community where the elements of society were still unsettled, and where popular talent was ever rewarded by popular favour, he should be early called upon to encounter the turbulent storms and tread the thorny path of a public life. Associating with men of education, station, and wealth, and removed by his large fortune far above the common wants of life, courted by the rich and powerful, and taught by the prevailing spirit of the age to regard the king as the great source of power and legitimate fountain of the people's rights, we should be led to expect from him more of loyalty to the former, than of patriotism to the latter. But his character and feelings were not of the ordinary mould. His was a noble nature, which amalgamated with and poured forth its sympathies with every grade of men. His love of liberty was enthusiastic and ardent, and he expressed it in language bold, convincing, and eloquent. That he soon became a favourite with the people, it is hardly necessary to state, and as a distinguished mark of their esteem and confidence, after having for some time occupied the municipal office of selectman of Boston, he was elected, in 1766,

with James Otis, Samuel Adams, and Thomas Cushing, a representative to the general assembly of the province. Here, side by side with Adams, he stood up the unwavering friend and champion of the people, battling monarchical power when its exercise clashed with popular rights, and fearlessly opposing official tyranny and executive usurpations. His readiness and power in debate, and the captivating influence of his manners, combined with an independence of action which even his enemies admired, soon placed him at the head of a most powerful and influential party.

The first act of importance which served to arouse the revolutionary spirit among the people, was the imposition of heavy duties upon the importation of foreign goods, and this tyrannical and oppressive measure was resisted by Hancock from its inception, and, aided by his influence and address, associations were formed for prohibiting the importation of British goods into the colony. The boldness and energy with which he opposed the will of the governor and his royal master, marked him for proscription; and when, a short time after his election, he was chosen speaker of the assembly, the governor's sanction was refused, and his seat

bestowed upon another. In 1767 he was chosen to the executive council, where the same opposition and official rejection awaited him. In proportion as he became an object of royal hatred, the affection evinced towards him by the people continued to increase. By many he was almost idolized, and all reposed in him the most unlimited confidence. His weight and influence with the popular party soon rendered him formidable to the British crown, and his corruption to its interests was resolved upon by Lord North, then prime minister of England. This wily noble saw the powerful elements that were forming in the colonies against the usurpations of their mother-land, and resolved to hush them into silence by conciliating their most prominent author, and thus binding him to royalty.

The ambition of Hancock, his fondness of elegant society, his polished manners, and his luxurious style of living, all combined to render him, in the opinion of the minister, peculiarly susceptible to the influence of a bribe, when proffered in the seductive form of station and power ; and as one golden link in the chain which was to bind him to the pillars of the throne, by the orders of Lord North his nomination to the

executive council was approved by the royal governor. The marked disapprobation which had been so long evinced towards Hancock by the minions of royalty, being thus suddenly withdrawn, and replaced by smiles of patronage and proffered honour, fears were excited on the part of his friends that his patriotism would swerve from its purity, and the envious and base-hearted assailed his noble name by poisonous insinuations that his devotion to the interests of the colonists had been sacrificed to the acquirement of kingly favour. But speedily and triumphantly did he vindicate his reputation from the dark suspicion which these assassin-like aspersions had cast upon its brightness. He indignantly refused to take his seat in the council chamber, and became still bolder in his denunciations against the measures of the British ministry. But that which forever placed him beyond the pale of royal pardon, was his connection with the popular demonstrations of indignation which immediately succeeded the "massacre of Boston," as it is called. The particulars of this massacre it is unnecessary to describe. They dwell in the memory of every American, who sees in them the germs of the revolution, and the first of a series of



blood-stained acts which at length drove our forefathers to arms. The next day after the enactment of this fearful drama, a large meeting of the citizens was held, and Hancock was appointed, with some others, to wait upon the governor and request him to withdraw the British troops from Boston. Although the latter dared not openly refuse to order their removal, yet he endeavoured to shield himself under the plea that his authority was not sufficient. But this did not avail him. A second committee was immediately appointed, with Hancock as chairman, who again waited upon him, and fearlessly and peremptorily urged their immediate withdrawal from the town; and the governor, fearing some terrible outbreak of popular indignation if they remained, was compelled to order their departure. Hancock had still another duty to perform in connection with the mournful event we have mentioned. It was to deliver an oration in commemoration of the massacre. His style and manner upon this occasion were bold, dignified, and impressive. The murder of the unoffending citizens by the soldiery was pathetically described, and its barbarity severely execrated. The injudicious policy of the government of

Great Britain towards her colonies was fearlessly exposed, and condemned in terms of the severest reprobation ; and the character of the mercenary troops which had been so recently quartered in Boston was examined, and their cruelty and infamy commented upon in a manner that gave deep offence to the British officers, civil as well as military

Denunciations against the colonial government so open and daring, as were expressed in this oration, were sure to bring down upon the head of their author the swift vengeance of the British authorities, but he feared it not. To him personal interests were slight, when compared with the good of a suffering people ; and although well aware that his commercial affairs, then in the most flourishing condition, must suffer irreparable injury in the event of a collision between the haughty mother-land and her infant colonies, he preferred freedom and a ruined fortune, to luxury and political slavery. The path he pursued was plain, open, and independent, unawed by the frowns of a British king, or the threats of his minions in power. The executive of the royal will found in Hancock a candid, yet powerful enemy ; and the people saw in him a firm, unflinching, and pat-

riotic friend. His large fortune was ever open to their necessities and wants, and his readiness to expend it in improving the civil, political, and moral condition of those around him, and in protecting them from the tyranny of their rulers, soon rendered him formidable as an opposer of the crown.

We need not relate the noble career of "Hancock and Adams," which continued unsullied until the battle of Lexington. The history of those times is well known throughout the country. When the British troops marched into the village of Lexington, Hancock and Adams were there secreted; and as the house which formed their asylum was entered in front, by the soldiers, the hunted patriots escaped by the rear, and thus eluded the vigilance of their pursuers. From this time forth, we find them proscribed, tracked, outlawed, and rewards offered for their apprehension, until Hancock, the arch and dangerous rebel, as he was called, was at length appointed a delegate to the "Continental Congress;" and in 1776, that body conferred upon him its highest honour. He was unanimously chosen their president. Being younger than most of his associates when the appointment was announ-

ced, he experienced that diffidence and embarrassment which are ever the accompaniments of genius ; and it was not until Benjamin Harrison, a strong-nerved, noble-hearted member from Virginia, had borne him in his stout arms to the chair, that his wonted self-possession returned ; and the rare, and almost unequalled dignity with which he had adorned other stations, became apparent.

When the Declaration of Independence first appeared, it was for some time circulated over the name of Hancock alone, as president of the congress ; and the bold and striking characters which form his signature, were the first to proclaim the fact. The station which he occupied, surrounded as it was by innumerable difficulties, and responsibilities of the most arduous character, could not have been more honourably filled by any among the noble band over whom he presided. Even the few who were opposed to him, bore the highest testimony to the courteous and dignified manner which marked his official career ; and when, in October, 1777, having for two years and a half of the darkest period of our revolutionary struggle sustained himself in his high seat, he was compelled, from severe bodily infirmities,

brought on by great mental exertions, to resign, he carried with him the esteem and respect of his colleagues, and was received by the citizens of his native colony with the warmest demonstrations of veneration and attachment, at times amounting almost to adoration.

The repose which he so much needed, appeared now within his reach; the enjoyment of the calm and quiet retirement, to secure which he had left the council chamber of his country, seemed about to be realized; but in this he was disappointed. Soon after his arrival in Massachusetts, he was chosen a member of a convention appointed to frame a constitution for that state; and feeling a deep interest and earnest solicitude respecting the provisions of so important an instrument, he accepted the trust, and by his experience, love of liberty, and profound knowledge of the principles upon which a republic should be based, assisted greatly in the deliberations and labours of the convention.

In 1780, he was elected governor of Massachusetts, being the first appointed under the new constitution, which he had assisted to frame, and was annually re-elected to that office until 1785, when he resigned. In 1787,

he was re-elected at a period when the spirit of fierce rebellion raged throughout New England, and when the safety of Massachusetts was threatened by a powerful faction composed of men dissatisfied with the government, many of whom demanded that all debts and taxes should be swept away, and that an equal distribution of property should be made, as a just and merited reward for the dangers and toils they had undergone during the war, and who were led on by dangerous and designing demagogues of broken fortunes and reputations. The measures which were adopted by him for the suppression of these riotous and dangerous proceedings were prompt, energetic, and efficacious. They were soon dispersed, and the ringleaders, fourteen in number, having surrendered, were tried for treason, and condemned to suffer death, but were pardoned by the merciful interposition of the governor.

When the creation of the federal constitution was agitated throughout the states, Hancock was appointed president of the convention which met in Massachusetts to deliberate upon its adoption. A majority of the members were believed to be opposed to it, and it was owing to his efforts in its favour, which sickness pre-

vented him from making until the last week of the session, that his native state was led to adopt an instrument which his statesmanlike sagacity enabled him to perceive would bind together the states in the closest alliance, while it would increase, to a vast extent, their power and prosperity.

On the 8th of October, 1793, Hancock, still governor of Massachusetts, died, in the fifty-fifth year of his age. His death was felt and mourned as a great national loss, and his enemies forgot the faults they had once condemned, and united in praising the noble, virtuous, and disinterested merchant—the statesman and patriot, who had perilled his fortune in defending his country against British tyranny.

To him, among others, we owe our independence, our liberty, our prosperity, and our national greatness, and the high rank we hold among the nations of the earth. We are indebted to him for the aid which, in our revolutionary struggle, was derived from the arms and influence of France, for it was his generosity that furnished the means, when our country was utterly destitute of money or credit, to fit out the Alliance frigate, to carry Colonel Laurens, our first accredited diplomatic agent

to the court of the French king, through whose influence and exertions during the darkest period of our revolutionary history, the co-operation of France was secured and her assistance extended, to help us break the chains of that political slavery with which we were bound.

As the first signer of the Declaration of American Independence, his name will not be forgotten while the history of mankind preserves among its records one of the noblest deeds ever performed in the cause of liberty ; but while this act alone will perpetuate his fame, his services in behalf of his oppressed country demand from us—to whom he has been so instrumental in transmitting a greater degree of religious, civil, and political liberty, than was ever enjoyed by any other nation on the globe—some rich and lasting monument to his memory.

We do not think it necessary to imitate the love of the ancients for their heroes, by building a temple and consecrating it to his memory ; but we do believe that it is our duty to raise at least one stone in commemoration of him, who, in the name of freedom, was the first to protest against British aggression ; who sacrificed his property, and risked his liberty and life, in



defence of our infant rights ; affixed his name to an instrument which was once the wonder, and has ever been the admiration of the whole civilized world ; and who, as president of the continental congress, signed the commission constituting the immortal Washington commander of the armies of the United States.

We have long been ungrateful to his memory, for though we may have cherished it fervently and reverently in our hearts, yet no public monument or statue has been carved to the honour of his name in our whole country. To the memory of many others we have erected monuments and sculptured statues, and their deeds are imperishably recorded upon the undying marble. At Savannah, a monument has been erected to the memory of the brave Pulaski ; and one to Montgomery, another to Hamilton, and another to Lawrence, in the city of New York. We find one to the memory of Spurzheim, a foreigner, at Mount Auburn, in Cambridge ; and another at Charlestown, to Harvard, the founder of the university at Cambridge which bears his name ; and another at Groton, near New London ; and upon the consecrated battle-ground of Lexington. While a column rears its giant

proportions and lofty height to the memory of Washington at Baltimore, a monument has also been erected at Boston, in the same burying-place where repose "unknowing and unknown" the remains of Hancock, to the PARENTS of Franklin.

It is strange that among all these and many more that we could mention, not one exists to the memory of "John Hancock." His remains sleep unnoticed beneath the soil which he, with others, freed from a tyrant's grasp, and the land which now echoes with the glad shouts of millions of freemen, contains no offering to the departed spirit of him to whom it is indebted for a large portion of its unrivalled blessings. This neglect to his memory cannot be palliated, far less justified. It cannot be said we are too poor to do him reverence ; for to perpetuate the memory of others, we have seen our country pour out its treasure with a lavish hand ; and to say that his deeds and actions alone are sufficient to immortalize his name, and that no monument need tower above his tomb, would be but the excuse for meanness and national ingratitude. From the earliest periods of demi-civilization, nations and communities have ever testified their approba-

tion of the services of great men, by engraving the history of their noblest acts upon columns of brass or marble; and let not our republic be the first to disregard a custom not more honourable in the observance than beneficial to succeeding generations.

Statues of brass were erected in the name of the people to Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripedes, the three great tragic poets of ancient Greece, to whom their country owed infinitely less than we owe to the memory of John Hancock. The Carthagenians erected altars and paid divine honours to the memories of two brothers, who, at the time of a dispute between the city of Carthage and the powerful city of Cyrene, in respect to the extent of territory which each possessed, had determined the controversy by running to meet two persons from the latter city, whom they beat in the race, and upon being accused of starting before the appointed moment, consented to be, and were actually buried alive, as an evidence of their honourable conduct. A splendid monument was erected by the Magnersians to Themistocles, the celebrated Grecian general; and a magnificent mausoleum, surrounded by nine vast towers, was reared by the Syracusians to

the memory of Gelon, their sovereign, who was distinguished as a statesman and a warrior; and the Athenians, after murdering Socrates, caused a statue of brass to be erected to his memory, of the workmanship of the celebrated Lysippus, and even dedicated a chapel to him, as a hero and demigod, which they called the "Chapel of Socrates." Statues of brass were erected to Harmodius and Aristogiton, the deliverers of Athens; and also to Phocion, whose just and noble qualities and love of his country had obtained for him the appellation of the "Good."

The idea of all nations, in thus immortalizing their heroes and statesmen, was pure and exalted. The object was to express, by these honourable distinctions, their high sense of gratitude, and at the same time to inspire in the hearts of their citizens a noble thirst for glory, and a burning love and devotion for their country.

The same rewards for distinguished services have, among all modern nations, been heaped upon the tombs of their great men; and let it not be inscribed upon the annals of our republic, to its disgrace, that we alone have proved

ungrateful to the first, the greatest, and the noblest of our patriots.

In the city of New York, the merchants of that great emporium of the western world are erecting an exchange which, when completed, will rank with the noblest and most splendid edifices upon the earth. In the interior of this stately pile, let one simple niche be reserved for the statue of John Hancock, the American merchant, whose wealth was freely given, and whose life was nobly perilled in the cause of human liberty. Let an American sculptor breathe into chiselled marble the soul, and invest it with the form, of him who should be the merchant's pride and boast; and let it stand the presiding genius of a temple reared and consecrated to the commercial interests of our great city.\*

\* The foregoing article is from the pen of Mr. G. Mountfort, who contributed it to *Hunt's Merchants' Magazine*, Dec., 1840.

## JOHN LANGDON.

THE late governor of New Hampshire, John Langdon, was born within the limits of Portsmouth, Dec., 1739. His father was a very respectable farmer. His mother being a woman of elevated character, and blest with a laudable ambition, was desirous of having her children educated so as to enable them to adorn a life of public usefulness. The father of young Langdon intended that he should engage in the same occupation, but the latter looking upon commerce as the grand highway to wealth, set his heart upon becoming a merchant, and accordingly made the necessary preparations to enter a counting house.

One of the most extensive and successful mercantile houses at that time in Portsmouth, was that of Daniel Ringe, a counsellor under the provincial government, and to him young Langdon made application and was admitted to his counting house, and soon became thoroughly versed in mercantile transactions. After completing his apprenticeship with Ringe,

he made several successful voyages with the view of ultimately establishing a house of his own in his native town. But the dark clouds that preceded the Revolution, began to skirt the horizon and his mind was suddenly turned in a new direction; naturally of a bold and fearless disposition he entered at once into the feelings of the colonists, and possessing in a remarkable degree the power to win over multitudes, he became the acknowledged leader of the "sons of liberty" in that little province, as much so, as Samuel Adams and John Hancock in Massachusetts.

Langdon was a leader exactly suited to the crisis. He took a conspicuous and active part in the struggle, and soon became obnoxious to the government and many of the loyal citizens, who feared the total annihilation of their trade, and looked upon disloyalty as a crime of the deepest dye. In the latter part of the year 1774, after it had become apparent that the crisis must come, Langdon gathered around him a band of choice spirits, and together they proceeded in silence to the king's fort at New Castle, seized upon all the powder and military stores, and removed their booty to a place of concealment, whence it was subsequently ta-

ken to be used with decisive effect in the battle of Bunker's Hill. This bold act produced at once an intense excitement. The royal governor, Wentworth, stormed, and issued proclamations, but not a voice uttered, or a thought whispered the secret. This occurred in December, four months before the battle of Lexington. After having been a member of the general court, he was chosen a delegate to congress in the Spring of the year 1775, and he attended the session which commenced in May, at Philadelphia.

In January, 1776, Langdon was re-appointed a delegate to congress, but before the passage of the Declaration of Independence, he was appointed continental agent. Under his inspection were built a number of ships of war, among which were the Raleigh, Ranger, America, Portsmouth, &c.

He commanded an independent company with the rank of colonel, and on all occasions signalized himself, more especially in the frequent alarms of the enemy's approach. On the arrival of the important military stores from France, he received and disposed of them according to the orders of congress.

When the Declaration of Independence was



publicly proclaimed, his company drew up before the State House, and there ratified it with acclamations of great joy, determined to support it at the risk of their lives and fortunes. He was a volunteer in capturing Burgoyne, and was also at Rhode Island with a detachment of his company, at the time the British troops had possession of the island, and when general Sullivan brought off the American army. No man had a higher popularity with the people at this time, than John Langdon. He was elected repeatedly to the legislature, and was for several years speaker of the assembly.

When the news of the fall of Ticonderoga reached New Hampshire, the provincial legislature was in session at Exeter. It was at a period when the resources of the patriots were almost exhausted, the public credit was gone, and the members of the assembly were disheartened. The men of New Hampshire had already exerted themselves to the utmost for the good of the cause. John Langdon was speaker of the assembly at the time. He rose in his place, on the morning after the intelligence was received, and addressed the house to the following effect: "Friends and

fellow citizens—I have three thousand dollars in hard money; I will pledge my plate for three thousand more. I have seventy hogsheads of Tobago rum, which shall be sold for the most it will bring. These are at the service of the state. If we succeed in defending our firesides and homes, I may be remunerated; if we do not, the property will be of no value to me.”

This proposal gave new life to the measures of the assembly, and in a few days the gallant Stark marched to victory at Remington at the head of the troops raised by the money the noble governor of New Hampshire had advanced. During the whole of the revolutionary struggle, Langdon was ever active and constant in his endeavours for the good cause. A man of the people in the emphatic sense of the term, he was always popular with the great mass, whose interests he sustained on all occasions. The esteem he once gained, he never lost, but retained it through life.

The highest offices were bestowed upon him. He was twice president of the state, under its first constitution; was a member of the convention which formed the federal constitution; was twelve years in the United States' senate;

was six years a governor of his own state, and he was earnestly solicited by Jefferson, to stand as candidate for the office of vice president. It was on his declining, that Elbridge Gerry was nominated and elected. He retired from public life in 1811, and lived in retirement until September 1819, when he died in Portsmouth, universally lamented by a people, in whose service the greater part of his active life had been spent.

## ELBRIDGE GERRY.

ELBRIDGE GERRY was born in the small town of Marblehead, in the province of Massachusetts Bay, in the month of July 1744. The father of Mr. Gerry, is represented as having been a respectable merchant of his native town, and as having amassed a considerable fortune in that avocation. The subject of this memoir received a collegiate education, and the degree of Bachelor of Arts at Harvard University, and was a bright ornament to that useful institution. After passing with honour through his course of study, he turned his attention to his father's line of business, and plunged at once into the most active commercial pursuits. By a most honourable, correct, and assiduous application to his business, good fortune smiled upon him, and even while young in years, as well as in business he had acquired considerable reputation in Marblehead. By his experience in money matters, finance, and commerce, he was admirably fitted, as we shall hereafter see, for

being a most active, and important member in committee on those subjects, in the hall of the representatives of his country. All such circumstances as these, of course identified him as public property, and pointed him out for public offices. Indeed, his own inclinations turned towards the political concerns of the province, which were every day becoming more serious and important.

On the 23d of May, 1773, he was chosen a member of the general court of Massachusetts as a representative of his native town, in which character he every way resisted the encroachments of the crown of Britain, and was one of the most zealous leaders of our country. Though they had to contend with a mighty nation, with artful agents of a foreign power amongst themselves, these patriots stood firm and undaunted, and opposed resolutely the arbitrary measures of the British ministry. An instance of his popularity, or the appreciation of the merits and abilities of Gerry, is shown in the fact that but two days after he had taken his seat in the house, he was appointed a member of the committee of inquiry and correspondence, created by the celebrated resolutions of Mr. Adams. In the investigations and proceedings of this

committee, he took an active part. In the following June, he warmly supported the measures of Adams towards Governor Hutchinson, and in fact in all those resolute measures which gave such uneasiness to weak minds, he most zealously united. "His spirit was nourished in close communion with the Adamses, the Hancocks, and the Warrens." In fact, the history of that period is one and the same with that of Gerry and his illustrious compeers, and the history of Massachusetts contains it all. Through the eventful period of 1774, and the momentous scenes which marked that year, Gerry was active among the foremost. In the committee which gave expression to the feelings of the people and the state of the province at that time, Gerry was a conspicuous and leading member. In the resolutions then framed, they urged the governor, (Gage,) to discontinue his offensive measure, and to redress their wrongs, and give the people justice. Congress then adjourned to Cambridge and met there a week after. Patriotic and resolute, these men came together, to adopt any measure which they should deem wise and expedient. They judged that nothing except absolute slavery, was more to be deprecated than that

of open warfare with the mother country : still they proceeded, and justly too, to call in military array a portion of the militia, for the defence of their rights.

Gerry was also a delegate at the second provincial congress, at Cambridge in the following February. Much of the business of the session was done by committees, and of these Gerry was a principal and active member—those of safety and supplies more particularly. The former chose several persons, to give notice of any motion from Boston into the country by the British military. They set a watch at Concord and Worcester, from which the arms and the artillery were removed. By the committee of supplies, military arms, &c., were much sought for. These precautions were most necessary, for immediately afterwards were enacted the bloody scenes of Lexington and Concord, and the war had actually began. These committees combined, had been sitting at Cambridge, and at the adjournment Gerry and his associates Lee, and Orne, having too far to go to their homes, were obliged to stay overnight. Midnight came, and the British troops were already on their march to Concord. The house in which our patriots were passing the

night being on their way, they surrounded it for the purpose of taking prisoners any of the important committees, who might remain there. By address and good fortune however, they escaped undressed, and were obliged to conceal themselves till the search was over.

Warren and Gerry were bosom friends, and the night previous to the memorable battle of Bunker's Hill, they retired to the same resting place. No sleep however, visited them. Their anxious thoughts turned to the unhappy condition of their country, and Warren's last words to Gerry were full of a melancholy presentiment of his approaching fate on the "awful heights"—*Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori*. Beautiful and worthy is it to die for one's country. They parted; Gerry to his duty in congress at Waterton, and General Warren, to die like a glorious martyr, in the cause of liberty.

Gerry afterwards received a judicial appointment as judge of the court of admiralty, which he declined, excusing himself on the plea of wishing to devote all his time and energies to the present exigencies of his country.

On the 18th of January, he with Hancock, the Adamses, and Paine, was chosen to the continental congress, then in session at



Philadelphia, in which he took his seat on the 9th of February. During the ensuing Spring he was on several important committees ; on the standing committee for superintending the treasury, on that of reporting the best ways and means, for supplying the army in Canada, and the defraying the expenses of the war, for raising ten millions of dollars, and many others for equally important purposes. Among the many acts which will make his name immortal ranks first and foremost, the signature of the Declaration of Independence. Thus closed his public services of 1776.

He was again elected by his fellow citizens, and again took his seat in that venerable body on the 9th of January, 1777.

About the end of the year 1779, he was appointed head of the commission chosen by Massachusetts, to meet delegates from the other states, for the purpose of devising some corrective for the sad condition of the currency. By this treasury board he was chosen its presiding officer ; and though the task was of immense labour and intricacy, their reports which is of much importance, were highly satisfactory and instructive.

In February 1780, a measure of congress,

with respect to the assessment of supplies, from the different states, gave much offence to Gerry. The contention was carried to such an extent, that he left his seat and returned home. Even while absent, the respect and esteem for him was such, that he was selected by congress one of their usual committees to visit. The solicitations of his friends overcame his reluctance to accede to this proposal, and he again came to our national convention in 1783. When the definitive treaty of that year was laid before them, a committee was appointed to whom it was referred, and the first three of that committee were Mr. Jefferson, Mr. Gerry, and Mr. Ellery, the only three who remained in that body of those who seven years before, signed the Declaration of Independence.

In 1784, he was again elected to congress, and though he was only 43 years of age he had been longer a member of that assembly than any other man in it.

In March 1784, he appeared in the house of congress, as chairman of a committee, which was rendered more illustrious, by having Mr. Jefferson, and other gentlemen of a like pre-eminence and patriotism, as coadjutors in it.

Shortly after this, he was appointed a member of the grand committee, authorized to revise the institutions of the treasury department, which proved a very difficult task for him to accomplish. The character of Elbridge Gerry, appears more exalted in its attributes, when we remember the friendly feelings which he entertained towards one of our country's worthiest benefactors and defenders, the immortal Steuben. And as a sequel to his affection for the worthy man, he presented a series of resolutions to congress, to compensate the said 'Steuben,' for his services and heroism in the revolutionary war.

On the 30th of April, of the same year, he presented a report to congress, relative to the commercial regulations of the states.

In September, 1785, the political career of Elbridge Gerry in the revolutionary congress, was brought to a close. It belongs to the impartial historian, to record the magnificent enterprises, which characterized the course of this patriotic statesman in that congress, where men of equal patriotism, integrity, and zeal, solicited the aid of their heavenly father, to reveal to them those plans which would result in the promotion of their country's

welfare. He then retired to his residence at Cambridge, a small village a few miles from Boston.

In 1787, he was chosen a delegate to the convention which assembled at Philadelphia, to assist in revising the articles of confederation. The members of the convention differed in their opinions, and so totally adverse were some to the newly offered constitution, that they refused to attach their signatures to it, to show their utter disapproval. Mr. Gerry belonged to that class which heartily opposed it, which circumstance affected for a short time, his accustomed popularity.

In the year 1789, he was elected a member of congress, which station he occupied for the space of four years. During this period, he gave his boldest assistance for the support of the constitution, for this reason—"that it had received the sanction of the people." Indeed he openly declared on the floor of the house—"that the federal constitution having become the supreme law of the land, the salvation of the country depended upon its being carried into effect." After resigning his seat in the house of congress, he returned to his favourite place of residence, Cambridge.

He was then appointed to accompany General Pinkney and Mr. Marshall, on a special mission to France, to prevent the interruption of the relations of amity, existing between that country and the United States.

His partners in the mission the French directory refused to recognise, but Mr. Gerry was invited to remain and continue the negotiation. The latter he refused to do, but consented to remain to prevent an interruption between the two nations.

In October, 1798, he returned home. As a memorial of gratitude, the democratic party wished him to become their candidate for the chair of governor of the state. He consented, and being defeated by his opponent, was again presented as a candidate in 1801. He was again defeated, and in 1810, he was a third time candidate, and was then elected, after a hard contest of parties.

In 1811, he was re-elected, but in 1812, his election was defeated. In the same year he was chosen vice president of the United States. On the 4th of March, 1813, he was inaugurated in his office, when he delivered a frank exhibition of his feelings as a statesman and patriot, willingly recognising the other public

functionaries, and promising to ensure them his sincere deference and respect.

In the year 1814, a final close was put to his earthly career, while proceeding to the senate chamber at Washington, "a sudden extravasation of blood took place upon the lungs, and terminated his life within twenty minutes, without a struggle, and apparently without pain."

Over his glorious remains, a white marble monument of rare and appropriate beauty, was erected by congress, as a remuneration for his past services, and in the appreciation of his worth as a revolutionary patriot.

It bears the following appropriate inscription :

THE TOMB OF

ELBRIDGE GERRY,

· VICE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

WHO DIED SUDDENLY IN THIS CITY, ON HIS WAY TO THE CAPITOL,  
AS PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE.

November, 23, 1814.

Aged 70.

## JOSEPH HEWES.

THE parents of Joseph Hewes were members of the society of friends, and at the time of their marriage resided in the colony of Connecticut, in one of the settlements the farthest removed from the coast of the Atlantic.

In this situation they were obliged to bear the double persecution arising from the often excited hostility of the Indians, who roved through the forests in their vicinity, and the prejudice still remaining among the puritans of New England, against all that wore the quaker habiliments or professed the quaker doctrines.

For persons of this persuasion, and indeed for all that were ambitious of a quiet and secure life, a residence in either Connecticut or Massachusetts, was at that period far from desirable.

The government of Massachusetts had, in order to "promote enterprise and encourage volunteers," raised the premium on Indian scalps and prisoners to one hundred pounds for each; and in the temper of mind which is suf-

ficiently indicated by such an enactment, a bitter and murderous warfare was waged against the natives of the forest, attended with circumstances often discreditable to the humanity of the white man, and with instances of reprisals and retaliation on the part of the Indians involving the most shocking barbarities.

The province of Connecticut had refused to unite in any measures of war that were not defensive ; but the Indians were not always careful to observe the boundary line between the two colonies, or to discriminate between people so closely resembling each other in manners and appearance.

The inoffensive and industrious farmers of Connecticut were therefore exposed to suffer the vengeance intended to be dealt upon the scalping parties of Massachusetts, and many of them moved off from the lands they had prepared for cultivation, to seek a more secure asylum in a southern colony.

Among these emigrants were Aaron and Providence Hewes, who made their escape from the scene of savage warfare not without difficulty and imminent personal risk ; so near, indeed, were they to the scene of danger, that in crossing the Housatanic river, they were



almost overtaken by the Indians, and were within the actual range of their bullets, one of which wounded Providence in the neck.

They took up their abode near Kingston, in New Jersey, where they found a peaceful and secure dwelling-place, and where they remained to the end of their lives.

Their son Joseph was born in the year 1730, and after enjoying the advantages of education common at that period, in the immediate neighbourhood of Princeton college, he went to Philadelphia to acquire a knowledge of commercial business.

He entered, as soon as his term of apprenticeship in a counting house was closed, into the bustle and activity of trade; and availing himself of the fortunate situation of the colonies in respect to commerce, and the great opportunities then afforded by the British flag, particularly when used to protect American ships, he was soon one of the large number of thriving colonial merchants, whose very prosperity became a lure to Great Britain, and induced her to look to this country for a revenue.

Mr. Hewes did not remove to North Carolina until he was thirty years of age, previous to which time he had been residing at New

York and Philadelphia alternately, with occasional and frequent visits to his friends in New Jersey.

Having made choice of Edenton for his future home, he soon became distinguished in the community of that city for his successful career as a merchant, his liberal hospitalities, great probity and honour, and his agreeable social qualities.

Although nearly a stranger in the state, he was very shortly invited to take a seat in the colonial legislature of North Carolina,—an office to which he was repeatedly chosen, and which he always filled with advantage to the people of that colony, and with credit to himself.

When the British ministry had proceeded so far as to close the port of Boston,—thus by a most decided and severe act evincing their fixed determination to proceed in their plan of taxing the colonies,—and the committees of correspondence instituted first at Boston and afterwards elsewhere, had proposed a meeting of deputies to a general congress to be held at Philadelphia, Mr. Hewes was one of three citizens selected by North Carolina to represent her in that assembly.

On the 4th of September, in the year 1774, this first congress began their session ; and on the fourteenth of the same month, Mr. Hewes arrived and took his seat.

Immediately after the assembling of congress two important committees had been appointed, to whom in fact nearly all the business of the congress was entrusted. The one was to "state the rights of the colonies in general, the several instances in which those rights are violated or infringed, and the means most proper to be pursued for obtaining a restoration of them." The other was to "examine and report the several statutes which affect the trade and manufacture of the colonies."

To the first of these committees Mr. Hewes was added very soon after he took his seat, and contributed his assistance to the preparation of their report, which was adopted on the 14th of October.

The non-importation agreement recommended by this report and determined to be adopted, was a very remarkable event in the annals of the revolution. It could only have been thought of by men having the most perfect confidence in the integrity and patriotism of the people, without whose universal and strict

resolution to maintain it, such a measure would be palpably unavailing. A system of privation not enforced by any law, nor guarded with any penal sanctions, but resting entirely on the deep and general sense of wrongs inflicted, and of the necessity of a united effort to obtain redress,—it evinced a steady resolution, a sober patriotism, and a generous sacrifice of selfish views to the common good, unequalled in the history of the world.

If any class of people more than the rest were entitled to particular praise for the patriotic ardour which induced them to join in this combination, it was unquestionably the mercantile part of the community, who sacrificed not only many of the comforts and enjoyments of life, but gave up also the very means of their subsistence, in relinquishing the importing trade to which they had been accustomed to devote their capital and labour.

Mr. Hewes was a merchant, and a successful one. He had been for more than twenty years engaged in the sale of merchandise imported chiefly from England and the British dependencies ; but he did not hesitate on this occasion to assist in the preparation of the plan,

to vote for it, and to affix his own name to the compact.

The association recited, in the first place, the injuries inflicted on the colonies by the various acts of the British government, against which the report of the committee had been directed, and then declares, that “to obtain redress for these grievances a non-importation, non-consumption, and non-exportation agreement, faithfully adhered to, would prove the most speedy, effectual and peaceable measure.”

Such an agreement was then concluded, to the observance of which, the associates were bound by the sacred ties of virtue, honour, and love of country.

It was recommended to the provincial conventions, and to the committees in the respective colonies, “to establish such farther regulations as they may think proper, for carrying into execution this association.”

Congress, after adopting an address to the people of Great Britain,—an address to the king, and one to the people of Canada, all distinguished by uncommon elegance and force of diction, and having resolved that it was expedient to meet again in May of the succeeding year, adjourned on the twenty-sixth of October,

and Mr. Hewes returned to his home in North Carolina.

In the ensuing spring, a convention of that colony was held at Newbern, when Mr. Hewes was elected a member of the continental congress about to assemble; the general assembly approved of this choice, and at the same time resolved to adhere strictly to the non-importation agreement, and to use what influence they possessed to induce the same observance in every individual in the province.

Mr. Hewes attended accordingly at Philadelphia when the new congress assembled in May, and continued with them until their adjournment, the last day of July.

The battle of Lexington had occurred a few weeks before the meeting of congress, and the first business that came before them was the examination of the depositions of witnesses, which at that period, or at least on that occasion, supplied the place of military reports, of the killed, wounded and missing, as well as of the movements of the hostile forces.

The first resolution of the congress was, however, notwithstanding the excitement naturally caused by the actual commencement of war, to present another loyal and dutiful ad-

dress to the king ; at the same time, now first glancing at the possibility of a separation, in a recommendation to the provincial congress of New York to prepare vigorously for defence, “ as it is very *uncertain* whether the earnest endeavours of the congress to accommodate the unhappy differences between Great Britain and the colonies by conciliatory measures, will be successful.”

The battle of Bunker’s Hill, and the appointment of a commander in chief of the army with a long list of major generals and brigadiers, in the succeeding month, placed the true nature of the contest more distinctly in the view of the people of America, and of the world. The society of friends, of which Mr. Hewes’ parents had been members, as well as himself in his youth, were now straining every nerve in an effort to prevent the revolutionary, republican, and warlike doctrines of the times from gaining a reception among the quakers. The society was numerous, wealthy, and respectable, and their opposition was powerful and active. In the beginning of the year 1775, they had held a general convention of the “ people called quakers” residing in Pennsylvania and New Jersey, and had put forth a

“testimony,” denouncing the congress and all its proceedings. This, however, did not have any effect on Mr. Hewes, or if any, not the effect intended. He broke entirely from communion with the quakers, and became not only a promoter of war, but a man of gaiety and worldly habits—even to the extent of being a frequent visiter of the ladies, and partaking, even with glee and animation, of the pleasures of the dance, in which he is said at all times of his life, after escaping from the restraints of his quaker education, to have taken much delight.

In the recess of congress, between July and September, he did not return to North Carolina, but made a visit to his friends in New Jersey, and was at hand when the next session was begun.

He was placed on the committee of claims, and that charged with the fitting out of the armed vessels ordered to be built or equipped for congress—the germ of the United States’ navy ; and thus he became in effect, and in the nature of his duties and responsibilities, the first secretary of the navy.

In the commencement of the next year, Mr. Hewes, having attained great respect in congress by his excellent qualities and habits of



close attention to business, was chosen a member of the *secret* committee, a post of extreme difficulty, and great responsibility, and requiring the closest application.

It was within the recollection of some of the long surviving patriots of this period, that Mr. Hewes was remarkable for a devotedness to the business of this committee, as complete as ever the most industrious merchant was known to give to his counting house.

After this time he was generally appointed on the most important committees, such as that to concert with General Washington a plan of operations for the ensuing campaign ; the one entrusted with the difficult task of digesting a plan of confederation ; another charged with the superintendence of the treasury ; one raised for the purpose of inquiring into the causes of the miscarriages in Canada, and several others of less moment.

Mr. Hewes was, during this period, a most active man of business ; the disbursements of the naval committee were under his especial charge, and eight armed vessels were fitted out with the funds placed at his disposal. He was attentive also to the condition of North Carolina, then direfully distracted with civil

war, and menaced also by the common enemy ; gunpowder and other munitions of war were sent by him at his own expense, but reimbursed afterwards by congress, to supply the exigencies of the republican troops in that part of the country.

He had the satisfaction of being present during all the debate on the question of declaring independence, and of voting in favour of the instant adoption of that imperishable manifesto which has made the 4th of July a jubilee for this nation. In voting on this side he acted in accordance with a resolution passed by the North Carolina convention, on the 22nd of April preceding, empowering the delegates from that colony to "concur with those of the other colonies in declaring independency."

North Carolina had thus the merit of being the first one of the colonies which openly declared in favour of throwing off all connection with Great Britain, a spirited and manly determination which entitles the leading men of that state to distinguished praise. Mr. Hewes by his indefatigable exertions in the equipment of the naval armament, as well as by the fearless constancy with which he had advocated independence, had acquired to a very great degree

the esteem and respect of the people whom he represented. In the beginning of the year 1777, therefore, he was again chosen a delegate, with such powers as to make whatever he and his colleagues might do in congress obligatory on every inhabitant of the state.

Mr. Hewes, however, did not accept this appointment. He left to his colleagues the tour of duty in congress, and devoted himself to his private affairs and to the benefit of his state at home during the greater part of that year and the whole of the next, nor did he resume his seat until the month of July, 1779. He was at this time in very ill health, his constitution had been totally broken down, and he was able to give little more assistance to the public councils of the nation.

His end was rapidly approaching; the last vote given by him in congress was on the 29th of October, after which he was wholly confined to his chamber until the 10th of November, when he expired, in the fiftieth year of his age.

On the day of his death, congress being informed of the event, and of the intention of his friends to inter his remains on the following day, resolved that they would attend the funeral with a crape round the left arm, and con-

tinue in mourning for the space of one month, that a committee should be appointed to superintend the ceremony, the Rev. Mr. White, their chaplain, should officiate on the occasion, and that invitations should be sent to the general assembly and the president and supreme executive council of Pennsylvania, the minister plenipotentiary of France and other persons of distinction.

The funeral ceremonies were accordingly conducted with all the pomp and display which the simple manners and sobriety of temper then prevalent in Philadelphia would admit. A large concourse of people including all the distinguished personages civil and military, witnessed the interment of his remains in the burial ground of Christ Church, and the outward show of respect to his memory was not in this instance forced or insincere.

Mr. Hewes possessed a prepossessing figure and countenance, with great amenity of manners and an unblemished reputation for probity and honour. He left a considerable fortune but no children to inherit it.

His death may be called untimely when we reflect on the brighter prospects that soon after opened on the country to whose happiness he

devoted himself with so much zeal, prospects in which he would have found a cause of infinite gratitude and joy ; but in other respects his end was more seasonable than that of some of his compatriots who lived to endure old age, infirmity and want ; he was taken in the meridian of his usefulness, but not before he had performed enough of service to this nation to entitle him to her enduring and grateful recollection.

## PHILIP LIVINGSTON.

PHILIP LIVINGSTON, one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, was descended from a family which had long been distinguished in the state of New York. His great-grandfather, John Livingston, was a celebrated divine in the church of Scotland, who emigrated in 1663 to Rotterdam, where he died in 1672. His son Robert soon after came to America, and obtained a grant for the manor of Livingston, in the colony of New York. Robert had three sons, the eldest of which was the father of the subject of this brief memoir, Philip, who received his father's own name. Philip was born in Albany, New York, on the 15th of January, 1716.

At the time when his preparatory knowledge was sufficiently advanced for him to enter a college, there were no flourishing establishments of high order for education in the province of New York ; and the institutions for elementary instruction were few and inferior.

In order to obtain the advantages of a collegiate education, his father sent him to Yale college in Connecticut, where he graduated in 1737. The pursuit of commerce being then the ruling passion, Mr. Livingston, after leaving college, embarked in that profession, and was soon engaged in extensive business. By uprightness in his dealings, his integrity, sagacious management, and enlarged and comprehensive views, he laid the foundation for that extraordinary prosperity which attended his enterprise. Having established himself in the city of New York, he was elected in September, 1754, an alderman of the east ward of that city, which then contained less than eleven thousand souls. This was his first appearance in public life. During nine successive years he was annually elected to that important and respectable station, and performed the duties of his office with the universal approbation of his constituents.

In consequence of the resignation of Sir Charles Hardy, governor of the colony of New York, who had been appointed a rear admiral in the British navy, the government of that province devolved on lieutenant governor James

Delancey. The general assembly was dissolved by the new governor, and a new election of members was consequently made. Although the compensation of members at that time was a mere trifle, yet the station was anxiously sought for, and was the subject of arduous contests. To that assembly Mr. Livingston with one of his brothers was returned a member from the city of New York.

When the general assembly met in 1759, Great Britain was at war with France, and was zealously assisted by the colonies. Mr. Livingston's superior talents and education rendered him conspicuous among his colleagues, and enabled him to take a distinguished part in the promotion of those measures, which, in conjunction with the other colonies and the mother country, resulted in the capture of Ticonderoga, Crown Point, Niagara, and Quebec, and subsequently in the conquest of all Canada.

Previous to the revolution, each colony had an agent in Great Britain, whose duty it was to pay particular attention to their interests in the British parliament. On the death of Robert Charles, who had been agent for the city



of New York, the celebrated Edmund Burke was unanimously chosen agent of that city, and a special committee was appointed to correspond with him. Mr. Livingston was on that committee at the time of Mr. Burke's engagement, and was in constant correspondence with him. It was by his communications with his constituents, that Mr. Burke derived those luminous and correct views of the state of the colonies, which enabled him to support the Americans in opposition to the ministry. Mr. Livingston took a decided and energetic stand against all the measures of hostility to the Americans, which the British ministry attempted insidiously to enforce. This is confirmed by his reported answer to the acting governor, Colden, who had been appointed lieutenant governor of New York. From the sentiments which that answer contained, he never swerved; but boldly sustained them to the close of his honourable life.

When a new assembly was called by governor Moore, he was associated with George Clinton, Pierre Van Cortland, General Philip Schuyler, and others, who unanimously chose him speaker, and enlisted under his banner. At that time the assembly consisted of but

twenty-seven members when all were present ; twenty-four of whom were present when Mr. Livingston was elected speaker. This shows the comparative strength of the whig party in the assembly at that period ; but subsequently their power was diminished so that the governor was able to obtain a majority who were subservient to his views and purposes. Mr. Livingston was, however, returned a member of the assembly ; but being in the minority, was not brought forward as speaker.

He was chosen a member of the first continental congress, which met in Philadelphia, September 5th, 1774. In this assembly he took a distinguished part, and was appointed on the committee to prepare an address to the people of Great Britain.

On the 22nd of April, 1775, a provincial convention was held at the city of New York, composed of deputies from New York, Albany, Dutchess, and other counties, for the purpose of appointing delegates to the continental congress, which had adjourned, and was to re-assemble on the 10th of May following. The convention appointed Philip Livingston, George Clinton, William Floyd, John Jay, Francis Lewis, Lewis Morris, and others, delegates

to that congress, and gave them full power to concert with the delegates from the other colonies, and adopt such measures as should be deemed most effectual for the preservation and re-establishment of American rights and privileges, and for restoring harmony with Great Britain. It was this congress which declared the independence of the United Colonies ; and Mr. Livingston, with his colleagues, William Floyd, Francis Lewis, and Lewis Morris, was present to subscribe their names to that much admired and memorable state paper. On the 9th of the same month, the convention of New York, having assembled at White Plains, unanimously sanctioned the measure.

On the 15th of July, 1776, he was chosen by congress a member of the board of treasury, and in the following April a member of the marine committee ; two important trusts, in which the safety and well-being of America were essentially involved.

His attendance in the continental congress did not, however, preclude his employment at home in affairs of importance. He was elected in November, 1774, a member of the association formed to execute the plan of commercial interdiction against Great Britain. Subsequent

to that period, he was appointed president of the provincial congress assembled in New York ; a member of the general assembly for that city ; and in June, 1776, he was chosen a delegate to serve in the provincial congress the next year, with the additional power of framing a new constitution for the colony.

After the new constitution of the state had been adopted by the people, Mr. Livingston was elected a senator under it, and took his seat on the 10th of September, 1777. This was the first senate of the state of New York. He was elected by the legislature one of the first delegates to congress, under the constitution of the state.

On the 5th of May, 1778, he took his seat in that body, at the most critical and gloomy period of the revolution. Congress had retired to York in Pennsylvania, after the British had taken possession of Philadelphia. Mr. Livingston had been requested by the state government to attend and devote his faculties to the salvation of his country. Although feeble in body and low in health, he consented to forego all considerations but those of patriotism. His family was at that time in Kingston ; and previous to his departure for congress, he

visited his relations in Albany, and after his return he addressed to them a valedictory letter, expressing his firm conviction that he should never see them again ; this opinion he reiterated to his family when he bade them a final adieu. The disease, under which he had laboured for a considerable time, was dropsy in the chest. On the 12th of June he expired, deprived of the consolations and the society of all his family, except his son Henry, then but eighteen years of age. This youth was then residing in the family of General Washington ; and on being informed of his father's illness, he immediately repaired to him, to perform for him the last duties which were prompted by filial piety and affection.

When intelligence of his decease was announced to congress, that body immediately took the necessary measures for having his funeral obsequies attended with such testimonials of respect as became the occasion ; and put on the usual badge of mourning, to be worn for the space of one month.

Thus terminated the life of Philip Livingston, one of the fathers of the American Republic ; a life distinguished for inflexible rectitude, and patriotically devoted to the good of

his fellow men, with honour to himself, and usefulness to his country ; and when the country was depressed and in a suffering condition, he sold a portion of his property to help sustain its credit ; and with a full presentiment of his approaching death, arising from the nature of his complaint, he did not hesitate to relinquish the sweets of home, and the endearments of a beloved family, to devote the last remnant of his illustrious life to the service of his country, then enveloped in the thickest gloom of adversity.

## STEPHEN GIRARD.

THE moral and intellectual features of different individuals are generally as strongly marked as their personal appearance. Each man exhibits a group of distinctive traits belonging to the mind or the heart, which, whether they are the offspring of some natural tendency, or the result of education, enable him to perform his part with greater effect in a particular circle of action, connected either with the arts or the sciences, poetry, philosophy, commerce, or eloquence. We design to devote this sketch to one who filled a large space in the mercantile history of our own country, displaying a character that was original and striking, and colored by events of deep interest and importance to those who are engaged in the bustling scenes of commercial traffic.

Stephen Girard was born on the 24th of May, 1750, within the environs of Bordeaux, in France. Of his parents little is known, excepting that they were obscure, and moved in the humble walks of life. During the early

age of ten or twelve he left his native country, having embarked in a vessel bound for the West Indies, in the capacity of a cabin-boy, without education, excepting a limited knowledge of the elements of reading and writing. The loss of his eye at that time, which was made the subject of ridicule among his early associates, tended probably to sour his temper, which appears to have been naturally morose; and with this physical deformity, without pecuniary means or patronage, he was thrown friendless upon the world. Remaining but a short time in the West Indies, he soon sailed from those islands in the service of a shipmaster, to whom he had probably bound himself as a cabin-boy and apprentice, and reached the port of New York. Girard appears to have gained the confidence and attachment of his employer, and he was successively promoted to the station of mate and afterwards to the office of captain of a small vessel, when his master left the sea, and in the performance of his duties he made several successful voyages to New Orleans. Embarking in adventures which are customary among those who are engaged in such service, he gradually collected from time to time small means which



furnished him a capital stock on which to trade, and indeed he soon became part owner of the cargo and ship which he commanded between the two places. The circumstances that induced him first to go to Philadelphia, are not ascertained ; but, in 1769, he is found an obscure trader, unknown, except within a very limited circle, opening his shop in Water street, of that city, where he was regarded merely as a quiet and thrifty man.

At this time his affections appear to have been interested in the daughter of an old caulker, or shipbuilder, who resided in that section of the city. The object of his attachment was Mary, or Polly Lum, as she was then familiarly called, a damsel who was then but very young, and distinguished for her plain comeliness, living as a servant-girl in the family of one of the citizens. As soon as it was found that affairs were hastening to a crisis, and Girard harbored serious designs of making her his wife, a feeling of downright opposition was aroused, and he was forbidden an entrance to the house. This difficulty was, however, encountered with success, and Polly Lum became his wife. The matrimonial alliance thus formed was attended with any thing but domestic happiness. A

neglect of duty on her own part, or an austere and morose temper in himself, appears to have prevented any portion of domestic bliss, which ended in his application to the legislature of Pennsylvania for a divorce. By this marriage there was only one child, who soon died. Upon his marriage Girard rented a small house in Water street, where he continued his pursuits, as sea-captain, ship owner, and merchant, according as either kinds of business appeared to furnish the greater chances of profit. During his occasional visits to New York, he very soon became acquainted with David Ramsey, Esq., of the last named city, who gave him letters to Isaac Hazlehurst, Esq., of Philadelphia. With the latter gentleman Girard entered into business, and the partnership purchased two vessels for the purpose of commencing a trade with the island of St. Domingo. These vessels were each armed with one gun, and set sail for that purpose. The brigs were, however, destined to misfortune, for they were soon captured and sent to Jamaica, a mishap which soon dissolved the firm. No distinct traces of the movements of Mr. Girard appear from the year 1772 to 1776, but it is highly probable that he con-

tinued in his old business, acting alternately as shipmaster, and merchant, despatching goods to New Orleans or St. Domingo, and remaining at home for a time, to settle his accounts and adjust the profits.

The war which soon followed swept the commercial enterprises of Stephen Girard from the ocean, and induced him to open a small grocery shop in Water street, that was connected with what might be termed a bottling establishment, or a place in which his most favorite occupation was the bottling of claret and cider ; but on the alleged approach of the British to the city of Philadelphia, about the year 1777, having purchased a small tract of land, called Mount Holley, from his old partner Mr. Hazlehurst, on which there was a house, he removed to that place, and continued his favorite occupation of bottling the fluids that we have mentioned for the market, from which he reaped considerable profit ; for the vicinity of his residence was the place of the American encampment, and the sales of his bottled claret and cider to the American soldiers was a source of no inconsiderable gain. At this point he remained until 1779, occasionally making a voyage to Philadelphia in a boat as

his stock required replenishing, or he wished to carry his bottled cider or claret to market, insomuch that he was frequently called an aquatic pedler; a course of trafic that he would doubtless have followed had any chances been proffered to him of gain; for labor of any sort was to his mind a binding duty, and none that would yield profit was too humble to be scorned. At this period his personal appearance was any thing but prepossessing. Coarse, ungainly, and rough, his low but sturdy form presented a vulgar aspect, which was heightened by the dingy and dark shade of his skin, which was not changed by the play of a single passion, and by the loss of his eye, which caused him to appear even more forbidding. The appearance of his person met with the derision of some of his more intimate friends, but he bore their jeers with unmoved fortitude, preserving in general a taciturn demeanor, and concealing the burning ambition which at that time must have been struggling in his breast. Upon the evacuation of Philadelphia by the British, in 1779, Girard was found returning to the city and occupying a range of frame stores upon the east side of Water street, simply attired, and so perfectly

plain in his appearance, that he was accustomed to go by the name of "Old Girard," in allusion to that fact. At this period his store was filled with pieces of cordage, sails, and old blocks, besides other apparatus, which were probably to be used in fitting out the ships that at this time he had probably projected, and that were afterwards destined to dot the ocean. His profits at this period must have been small, as the commercial condition of the country was much depressed, being prostrated by the British, who had devastated all within their reach.

In 1780, Mr. Girard again entered upon the New Orleans and St. Domingo trade, which he prosecuted successfully, and increased his gains to such an extent that he was enabled to extend his enterprises to a much broader scale. Two years afterwards he took a lease of ten years of a range of brick and frame stores, one of which he occupied himself; and the rents being at that time very low, it is obvious that a large amount of gain must have been derived from this lease, especially as he had secured the privilege of renewal for the same period. Indeed, he confessed himself, that it was this lease which furnished the

foundation of his subsequent good fortune. Soon after this time, Stephen was induced to enter into partnership with his brother, Captain John Girard, in connection with a firm which was then prosecuting a very successful commerce with the West Indies. But bickerings soon sprang up between the two brothers, and these contentions had grown to such bitterness, that, in 1790, it was deemed prudent to call in an umpire for the adjustment of the concerns, with a view to the dissolution of the partnership; and the whole amount of the fortune of Stephen, which fell to his share from the concern, was thirty thousand dollars. The domestic difficulties of Mr. Girard with his wife soon ripened to a crisis which attracted the attention of their most intimate friends, and during this year Mary Girard was admitted as an insane patient into the "Pennsylvania hospital." Here she continued until the year 1815, when she died, having remained in that institution twenty-five years and one month. On receiving information of her death, her husband selected the place of her interment, and requested that as soon as all the arrangements for her funeral had been completed, he should be called. At the close of the day, her

coffin was seen moving along the avenue to the grave, and was there deposited in the manner of the Friends. Among the group of mourners was her husband, whose countenance remained unchanged as monumental bronze, while the funeral obsequies were performing. He shed no tear, and after bending over the remains of his wife, as if to take a last look, he departed, saying to his companions, in the tone of a stoic, as he left the silent spot, "It is very well," and thus returned home. Some reparation was however made for this unfeeling spirit by a gift to the hospital, about this time, of three thousand dollars, besides suitable presents to the attendants, and also a considerable sum that was originally granted, including his fee as a member of the corporation.

From the time of the dissolution of his partnership with his brother, the career of Girard in the acquisition of wealth was much brightened, and a circumstance occurred which was tragic in its circumstances, while it tended to swell his coffers. Having been engaged at that time in the West India trade, and particularly in that of the island of St. Domingo, in which port he had at that time two vessels, it chanced that during the period of the well-known insur-

rection upon that island that these vessels were lying at the wharf. On the sudden outbreak, the planters, as was natural, rushed to the docks and deposited their most valuable treasures in the ships that were there lying, for the purpose of their safety, and returned in order to the securing of more. But the result was such as might have been anticipated, for but few claimants ever appeared, the greater part having been massacred; and the vessels of Girard were found laden with property of great value, whose owners could not be found, after the most liberal advertising. This property, consisting in value of about fifty thousand dollars, was transported to Philadelphia, and tended to add largely to his already considerable fortune, as the original owners, consisting of entire families, had been swept away amid the pillage and devastation of that island. In the year 1791, and the subsequent year, Mr. Girard commenced the building of those beautiful ships which have ever been the pride of the city of Philadelphia, vessels which soon engaged largely in the trade with Calcutta and China. The names of some of these ships, while they indicate the national prepossessions of their owner, also show the bent of his mind,



being called the Montesquieu, Helvetius, Voltaire, and Rousseau. At this period the desire of fame, the movements of ambition, seeking money, not from avarice, but as a means of power, appear to have taken a firm hold upon his mind, and amid the abstract musings of the lone man, regarded with no affection by a human being, a man whose sympathies appear to have been steeled against the world; he was doubtless, in the cold recesses of his solitary heart, even while calculating the interest upon the tenth part of a cent, projecting fabrics of anticipated renown, upon whose walls his own name would be written in letters of living and enduring light.

We now approach a period in the life of Mr. Girard which tended in good measure to relieve his character from the imputation of selfishness and want of feeling, that had, to this time, so deeply shaded it. We allude to the part he bore in that terrific pestilence, which, it will be remembered, in the year 1793, broke out in the city of Philadelphia, converting that beautiful metropolis into a foul and disgusting charnel-house. During the time to which we refer, the yellow fever had produced ravages and revolting scenes of misery which have

never been equalled in the country, and that have been seldom witnessed anywhere. Whole streets were left tenantless, excepting, perhaps, by the dead bodies of their former occupants, that had been forsaken by their friends. The hearse was the vehicle that was most frequently seen in the streets. The obsequies of an ordinary funeral were denied to those who would, but a short time previous, have attracted crowds of mourners to their graves. The individual who was seen with the badges of mourning upon his arm was avoided as the Upas tree, and almost every person was involved in the fumes of camphor or tobacco. While this pestilence was raging at its utmost height, an individual, of low and square stature, was perceived alighting from a coach which drew up before an hospital where the most loathsome victims of this disease had been collected for the purpose of being attended with medical aid. The man entered this living sepulchre, and soon returned bearing in his arms a form that appeared to be suffering in the last stages of the fever, a being whose countenance was suffused with that saffron color which seemed to be the certain harbinger of death. The body was deposited in a coach,

and the carriage drove away. The man who was thus seen performing this act was *Stephen Girard*. It might be, and indeed has been said, that having gone through the seasoning process in a tropical climate, he was proof against the disease. But whether that was or was not the case, it does not abate in any measure the credit which is his due in thus exposing, at least, his life in behalf of a fellow-being. And it is a well-attested fact that during the prevalence of the disease he continued a constant attendant in the hospital, performing all those offices which would seem revolting to the most humble menial.

The institution of the private bank of Mr. Girard in Philadelphia, that was originally believed to have been the offspring of a long and deeply settled plan that had been matured in silence and solitude, appears to have been the result of a temporary circumstance, which was the opposition that then prevailed to the old Bank of the United States. Girard was a firm friend to that institution, and was convinced that a corporation which had been organized under the advice of Washington, and which he supposed had conferred obvious and solid advantages upon the country, should have been

perpetuated. Believing that this bank would be renewed, Mr. Girard, as early as in 1810, transmitted orders to the house of Messrs. Baring Brothers & Co., London, to invest his funds in shares of the Bank of the United States, a transaction which was performed during the following year, by the purchase of stock in that bank to the amount of half a million of dollars. The house of the Barings, however, was unable to transmit his funds periodically, owing to the critical condition of the Bank of England, and their own state verging upon bankruptcy; and it may be perceived upon what an uncertain foundation his own property rested when we learn the fact, that this house was indebted to him, in the year 1811, in the sum of two hundred thousand pounds sterling. After a time, however, he succeeded in extricating his funds from that country, partly by investment in British goods and public stock, and purchased shares of the Bank of the United States, for which he paid one hundred and twenty dollars per share, with a view to the investment of his capital in an independent form, and probably from an ambition to become himself a regulator of the currency. Mr. Girard having discovered that

he could purchase the old Bank of the United States and the cashier's house at the reduced price of one hundred and twenty thousand dollars, being less than one third of their original cost, on the 12th day of May, 1812, commenced the banking operations of the old Girard Bank, with a capital of one million and two hundred thousand dollars, which was increased the succeeding year to one million and three hundred thousand; the bulk of the business of the old Bank of the United States, including five millions of specie, the funds of that institution, being deposited in his vaults. Aided by such accession to his funds, and with the officers of the old bank retained in his employ, together with the business which was transferred to his hands from that institution, the customers of the old corporation being turned over to him, Mr. Girard, backed by the valuable assistance of Mr. Simpson,\* his cashier, who had before been engaged in the former institution, commenced his operations upon the same principles that had regulated the old body. The non-renewal of the charter of

\* To a work prepared by a son of that gentleman, we are indebted for most of the facts connected with the life of Mr. Girard.

the Bank of the United States, however, led to the establishment of his own.

The organization of the Girard Bank tended to confer extensive and solid benefits upon the community. Conducted upon a liberal scale, it was the policy of Mr. Girard to grant accommodations to small traders, and thus to encourage beginners; while, at the same time, the smaller notes were preferred to the larger ones. It was obvious that the organization of this institution tended to avert the evils that must necessarily have flowed from the entire suspension of the circulation of the funds of the old institution; and whatever of temporary inconvenience arose from that fact was soon neutralized by the extraordinary efforts that were made by this able financier to remedy the evil, and to diffuse abroad the benefits that had flowed from the old bank. During the commencement of his banking operations, Mr. Girard, who had accustomed the institution to the discount of accommodation paper to a large amount, for auctioneers who practised the advance of large loans upon foreign and imported goods, perceiving that losses were found accruing from such a plan of proceeding, and that his capital was engrossed by these auctioneers,

soon deemed it prudent to alter his policy ; and in 1816, it was understood that no paper that was merely fictitious was to be discounted at his bank, and no renewal of a note was accordingly allowed. On this change of his banking plans, his profits augmented, and but few losses occurred.

The establishment of this private bank exhibited to the country the novel spectacle of a private American banker conducting his institution upon a large scale, and conferring advantages upon the community nearly as great as those which had been derived from state or national auspices. And this bank rendered important service to the government. The fiscal affairs of the nation had been thrown into confusion by the dissolution of the former bank, and the suspension of specie payments added to the general embarrassment. Yet, while the public credit was shaken to its centre, and the country was involved in difficulties springing from its exhausted finances and the expenses of war, the bank of Mr. Girard not only received large subscriptions for loans, but made extensive advances to the government, which enabled the country to carry on its belligerent enterprises ; loans, too, which

were the spontaneous offspring of patriotism, as well as of prudence. This aid appears to have been rendered from time to time, down to the period of 1817, when the second national bank superseded its assistance. A circumstance soon occurred, however, which was a source of no little discomfiture to the financial arrangements of this individual institution. This fact was the suspension of specie payments by the state banks, resulting from the Non-intercourse Act, the dissolution of the old bank, and the combined causes tending to produce a derangement of the currency of the country. It was then made a matter of great doubt with Girard how he should preserve the integrity of his own institution while the other banks were suspending their payments; but the credit of his own bank was effectually secured by the suggestion of his cashier, Mr. Simpson, who advised the recalling of his own notes by redeeming them with specie, and by paying out the notes of the state banks; and in this mode, not a single note of his own was suffered to be depreciated, and he was thus enabled, in 1817, to contribute effectually to the restoration of specie payments.

Meanwhile, an interesting circumstance



occurred, which enabled him, by his bank, in 1813, to accomplish an enterprise which was of great importance to the city of Philadelphia, by the increase of its trade, as well as to his own funds in its profits, besides the advantages which were furnished to the government by the duties which accrued to the national treasury. It happened that his ship, the *Montesquieu*, was captured at the mouth of the river Delaware, as was alleged, by a British frigate, and as this vessel had an invoice cargo of two hundred thousand dollars—consisting of teas, nankeens, and silks—from Canton, it was determined by the captors, in preference to the hazard of being recaptured by an American ship in their attempt to carry their prize to a British port, to send a flag of truce to Mr. Girard, in order to give him the offer of a ransom. Applying to his well-stored vaults, the banker drew from it the sum of ninety-three thousand dollars in doubloons, which was transmitted to the British commander, and his vessel was soon seen coming into port with her rich cargo; which, notwithstanding the price of the ransom, is supposed, by the advance of the value of the freight, to have added a half a million of dollars to his fortune.

It may be mentioned as an act indicating his patriotism at least, that in 1814, when the credit of the country was exhausted, the treasury bankrupt, the resources of the nation prostrated, and an invading army was marching over the land; when, in fact, subscriptions were solicited for funds to the amount of five millions of dollars, upon the inducement of a large bonus and an interest of seven per cent, and only twenty thousand dollars could be obtained upon that offer for the purpose of carrying on the war, Stephen Girard stepped forward and subscribed for the whole amount; and that when those who had before rejected the terms, were now anxious to subscribe, even at a considerable advance from the original subscription, these individuals were let in by him upon the same terms.

The agency of Mr. Girard appears to have been very active in the organization of the Bank of the United States, which was chartered in 1816. His intimacy with Mr. Dallas, and his success in impressing upon his mind the frame of the projected institution, seems to have been admitted, and that gentleman is stated to have made use of the frequent expression of the French banker, that "the national authority was requisite for the establishment of a sound cur-

rency, by the aid of a national bank." His friends, indeed, have gone so far as to allege that even the establishment of his own private institution was his desire to hold up to the country the example of the influence of such an institution in regulating the currency of the nation; and that, in the capacity of banker, he acted as a trustee for the country, designing to unite its influence with that of the projected national bank, in order to the accomplishment of its object; and even after the outline of that institution was formed, and Mr. Girard was chosen one of the directors, he made the formal proposition that if the board would agree to elect his cashier—Mr. Simpson—the cashier of the Bank of the United States, he would unite his own institution with that, and deposit in the new corporation one million of specie which he held in his vaults. Even after the bank was regularly organized, and its prosperity placed upon a solid foundation, Mr. Girard, acting as one of its directors, not only impressed its policy with his clear-sighted, far-reaching, and sagacious views, but practised towards it a forbearance and liberality which marked him as its strong and faithful friend. When that institution was unable, from the pressure of the times, to pay to him even half

the amount which was his due in specie, he refrained from demanding it, and evinced himself the firm supporter of its interests; and when specie payments were resumed, he recommenced, at the same time, the issuing of his own notes.

One of the essential characteristics of Mr. Girard was his public spirit. At one time, he freely subscribed one hundred and ten thousand dollars for the navigation of the Schuylkill; at another time, he loaned the same company two hundred and sixty-five thousand eight hundred and fifty dollars. When the credit of the state of Pennsylvania was prostrated by what was believed to have been an injudicious system of internal improvement, and it was found expedient for the governor to resort to its metropolis, in order to replenish its coffers, he made a voluntary loan to Governor Shultz of one hundred thousand dollars. So far was his disposition to promote the fiscal prosperity of the country manifested, that as late as 1831, when the country was placed in extreme embarrassment from the scarcity of money, he perceived the cause in the fact that the balance of trade was against us to a considerable extent, and he accordingly drew upon the house of Baring, Brothers & Co., for bills of exchange to the

amount of twelve thousand pounds sterling, and which he disposed of to the Bank of the United States, at an advance of ten per cent; which draft was followed up by another for ten thousand, which was disposed of in like manner to other institutions. This act tended to reduce the value of bills, and the rate of exchange suddenly fell. The same spirit which he manifested towards the national currency he exhibited to the corporation of Philadelphia, by erecting new blocks of buildings, and beautifying and adorning its streets; less, apparently, from a desire of profit than from a wish to improve the place which was his adopted home, and where he had reaped his fortunes. His subscription of two hundred thousand dollars to the Dansville and Pottsville Railroad, in 1831, was an act in keeping with the whole tenor of his life; and his subscription of ten thousand dollars towards the erection of an exchange, all looked to the same result. Thus passed the life of Stephen Girard, the financier, the banker, the economist; with a soul devoted to what most men so ardently seek—the acquisition of wealth; expanding his influence through the whole circle of mercantile enterprise, and marking the fiscal system of the nation with his own broad impression.

Having given the prominent facts connected with his life in chronological order, we now propose to draw a brief portraiture of his character, and this can be most properly done by a condensed view of the incidents connected with its history. We see this man, at first a cabin-boy, embarking from his native country without money or apparent friends; then a mate of a trading vessel, supercargo, and shipmaster; shopkeeper, bottler, a lessor of houses, a large merchant; and lastly, a private banker, having the control of millions, and enabled, by his own individual power, to control the contractions and the expansions of the money market. It was the peculiar circumstances which attended his first entrance into life that colored his subsequent career. In his early voyages before the mast, from place to place, in the operations of traffic, his discerning eye clearly perceived the mode in which fortunes were obtained, and in such expeditions he derived a kind of experience which determined him at once to enter upon a mercantile course; and although without the advantages of an early classical education, he had acquired precisely that sort of information which empowered him to prosecute this mode of life the most successfully. And he commenced,

where most wealthy men who have acquired their own fortunes have begun, namely—with small means. Contented with the minute gains of an obscure retail trader, and willing to perform any labor, however humble and arduous, by which those gains could be secured, he was determined to be rich ; and adopted that system of business which would most effectually ensure that result, making it a fixed principle to practise the most rigid economy ; to shut his heart against all the blandishments of life ; to stand to the last farthing, if that farthing was his due ; to bar out all those impulses which might in small objects take money from his purse ; to saw down his measure when that measure was too large ; to plead the statute of limitations against a just claim, because he had a right to do so by the law ; to use men as mere tools to accomplish his own purposes ; to pay only what he had contracted to pay to his long-tried and faithful cashier, who had been the cause of much of his good fortune ; and when he died in his service, to manifest the most hardened and unnatural indifference to his death, without making the least provision for his family, or to express one sentiment of regret at his loss, or gratitude

for the solid services which he had performed for him.

But the man who would thus violate the ordinary impulses of a feeling and generous nature, when large objects connected with his commercial views were to be obtained, was found foremost in the liberal aids which were granted for their accomplishment. He who would haggle and chaffer for a penny, was willing to bestow thousands for the pecuniary relief of fiscal pressure, and while he curtailed the watchman of his bank of his customary dole of a great-coat on a Christmas-day, he would give large sums for the furtherance of the local improvement of his adopted city and state. If we were to specify the prominent point of his character, we should mention a feature that would, perhaps, be the last that was supposed to belong to this individual—*Ambition!* He sought money, not from avarice, but from a desire of power. Denied the advantages of that education which so directly tends to the enlargement, refinement, and polish of the mind, he knew that he could not obtain distinction from this source, and his vulgar person, scarred by the Almighty, while it made him conscious that he would never be made the subject of personal respect,



served, perhaps, to give him a misanthropic and morose cast of mind. Money, then, was the only avenue by which he could obtain the eminence that he coveted, not wealth to be dissipated in rich saloons, and splendid equipages, and liveried servants bearing his badge—for a carriage and four would have been little befitting his character—but money to be exercised as the Archimedian lever by which he could move the fiscal world. The desire of this, as the means of influence, was the master-spirit which conquered his soul, and paralyzed all other feelings, and it had grown to such a strength that sympathy for his kind seldom enlivened the solitude of his heart.

“Like monumental bronze, unchanged his look—  
A soul which pity never touched or shook—  
Trained from his lowly cradle to his bier,  
The fierce extremes of good and ill to brook,  
Unchanging, fearing but the charge of fear—  
A stoic of the mart, a man without a tear.”

It may be well to draw a brief sketch of the domestic life and habits of Mr. Girard, and in the first place we would attempt to portray his personal appearance. His form was low and square, although muscular, with feet large, and

his entire person and address exhibiting the aspect of a rough old sailor. Nor was his countenance calculated to alter the impression that would be likely to be produced by the appearance of his person. A face dark, and colorless, and cold, although deeply marked with the lines of thought, indicated a man who had been accustomed to the hard fare of life; and it possessed an iron, or as it has been, perhaps, more properly designated, a stone-like expression. His "wall eye" seemed to add to that air of general abstraction that was evinced by his general demeanor, whether engaged in his domestic offices, or the more active business of his banking operations. But the dull eye which seemed ordinarily to sleep in its socket, and whose predominant expression was cunning, sometimes kindled, as if with fire, when any topic adapted to his taste was pressed upon his attention. His mind appeared to be engaged less upon the little details of his business than in projecting those great projects of mercantile speculation which tended so directly to swell his coffers, and yet he was scrupulous in his devotion to all those minute points of business which fell within the wide circle of his enterprises. But if a ship was to be built, or a house constructed, or a vessel

to be freighted, his presence was seldom wanting to superintend and direct the most unimportant details. From the year 1812 he was partially defective in the hearing of one ear, and as he could only speak in broken English, and seldom conversed, excepting upon business, this circumstance threw around his character an air of even greater mystery. His ordinary style of dress was in exact keeping with his plain and homely traits. Although apparently identified in habits and feelings with our American institutions, and possessing no prejudice in favor of his native country, he constantly wore an old coat cut in the French style, and remarkable only for its antiquity, generally preserving the same garment in constant use for four and five years. Nor did he maintain a costly equipage, as would have seemed to be natural for one who had such large means at his command. An old chair, distinguished chiefly for its rickety construction, as well as its age, which he at last caused to be painted and marked with the letters S. G., drawn by an indifferent horse, suited to such a vehicle, was used in his daily journey to the Neck, where lay his farm, to the laborious cultivation of which he devoted the greater portion of his leisure time. But even here, where it might

have been supposed that he would have exercised the ordinary rights of hospitality, no friend was welcomed with a warm greeting. In one instance an acquaintance was invited to witness his improvements, and was shown to a strawberry-bed which had been, in the greater part, gleaned of its contents, and told that he might gather the fruit in that bed, when the owner took leave, stating that he must go to work in a neighboring bed. That friend finding that this tract had been nearly stripped of its fruit by his predecessors, soon strayed to another tract, which appeared to bear more abundantly, when he was accosted by Mr. Girard—"I told you," said he, "that you might gather strawberries only in that bed." Such was his hospitality.

Behind the cold and abstract exterior exhibited by this man in his ordinary intercourse with the world, there raged the most violent passions, which were lavished liberally upon his old and faithful clerk, Mr. Roberjot. Yet to his superiors in standing and education he was deferential, and seemed to lay great stress upon inherited rank. Peculiarly was that feeling expressed in his respect for Mr. John Quincy Adams, whom he professed to regard, not only for his high intellectual and moral traits, but from the fact that

he belonged to, what he called, a great and old family, which had been long identified with the progress of the government. There seemed, indeed, to lurk in the character of this individual, appreciations which the world could not understand—a deep sagacity, a just discrimination of what was right and proper, and a practical knowledge of the relations of things; and while other men were supposing that his mind was removed from the objects that surrounded him, he was, in the solitude of his reflections, laying up treasures of knowledge, the result of observation and experience, which enabled him to act with that promptitude and success that made his mercantile judgment almost the certain test of truth. He belonged, in fact, to that small class of men whom the world do not understand, and accordingly do not appreciate. Removed in their intellectual habitudes from the temporary and minute details of daily life, yet closely observant of the facts which surround them, their opinions are not colored by those of other men, and their powers are felt only by the results. Of his opinions, it is easy to form a correct judgment. A citizen of this country, and identified with its interests—a country, whose liberal institutions

had not only afforded him a home, but provided ample scope for his largest enterprises, and a basis for his most solid fortunes—it was his interest, as well as his pride, to foster those institutions by all the aid within his power, for their welfare was his own. Accordingly, we find him bestowing that aid upon all those public objects which were within his reach; and it is, perhaps, more just to attribute this assistance to a strong desire to promote the public good, than from a wish to secure a large return for an investment. His former habitudes of living had accustomed him to a plain and frugal scale of expenditure, and that rigid personal economy he preserved through his long life, as much from habit as from principle; since he knew that large fortunes were acquired by the ordinary process, only by rigid commercial exactitude and frugality. Thus while his freights were vexing every sea, and his influence was extending throughout a wide circle of mercantile action, he was contented to drive his shabby carriage in his homely garb from his bank to his farm, and it is not unlikely that he took a secret pride in that contrast which was exhibited between the splendor of his wealth, and the almost odious

aspect of his personal appearance and address. The religious sentiments which he maintained, and that he was unwilling to disguise, were of the school of Rousseau and Voltaire; and so deeply did he venerate their characters, that the marble busts of these two scholars were, we believe, the only works of art that adorned his confined chamber, and a complete set of the writings of the latter author, together with a few treatises on gardening, were the only volumes which constituted the library of his dwelling-house. The respect with which he regarded the names of these individuals, we have already seen evinced in the beautiful ships which, from time to time, were despatched by him from the port of Philadelphia. He appears, indeed, to have preserved throughout life a stoicism in his merely speculative opinions, which referred all surrounding circumstances to second causes, rather than to their true source. And in conformity to that spirit was his life: unmindful of those sterner moral duties which are inculcated by the precepts of Christianity, he neglected them in practice so far as they related to expanded charity, or that chastity, whose lustre is the dazzling purity of the drifted snow. Yet here

we find displayed the extremes of character. A total disbeliever in the Christian system, he was still willing to bestow large sums upon different Christian denominations, bounties which took effect while he was yet alive. But although he would grant large aids to large objects, he withheld assistance from deserving subjects of individual benevolence. No man sought his alms with a prospect of relief, and beggary departed from his door hungry as when it came.

His doctrine appears to have been this: that the granting of small sums to obscure objects, that the opening of his heart to those appeals which would naturally be made upon the wealth of so opulent a man, would have diminished his chances of bestowing his bounties upon those important subjects which would redound to his name. And it was necessary to understand his peculiar self-will, and the character of his temper, to obtain aids at all. The solicitor for aid, who made small demands upon his charity, was relieved with thousands; the individual who came before him in the spirit of exaction, was put away with nothing. In transactions of business, all his affairs were set down to the account of loss and profit; and in his dealings



with others, the same principle was required to be acted on. Up before the morning lark, he soundly berated his own workmen who permitted him to gain the precedence in time; and unceasing labor, which allowed but little relaxation, excepting that which was required by nature, was the master-genius of his life. When one of the younger Barings was in the city of Philadelphia, but a few years since, he supposed that he might excite an agreeable surprise to Mr. Girard by informing him of the safe arrival of his ship, the *Voltaire*, from India. Accordingly, having engaged a carriage, he proceeded to the farm of the banker, in Passyunk, and immediately sought for Mr. Girard. "Where is Mr. Girard?" inquired the Englishman. "In the hay-loft," he was answered. "Inform him that I wish to see him," was no sooner said than the banker, with his sleeves rolled up, was before him. "I came to inform you," said the Englishman, "that your ship, the *Voltaire*, has arrived safely." "I knew that she would reach port safely," replied Girard, "my ships always arrive safe; she is a good ship. Mr. Baring, you must excuse me; *I am much engaged in my hay;*" and he mounted again to his hay-loft.

A life of such unceasing and severe labor, now protracted to the eighty-second year, could not hold out long. During the previous year, in 1830, having nearly lost the use of his eye, he was frequently seen groping in the vestibule of his bank, disregarding the assistance of others, a species of temerity which, as it proved, nearly cost him his life; for, crossing Second Street and Market, a dearborn wagon rapidly drove by, and nearly took off his ear, and bruised his face, having struck furiously against his head, and prostrated his person; an injury which proved serious and permanent. By this accident the whole of his right ear was nearly lost, and his eye, which was before opened but slightly, was entirely shut; and from that time his flesh was gradually wasted away, and his health declined. Mr. Girard had long regarded death with apparent indifference, having stated many years previously that it fell within the course of nature that his life should terminate, even at that period. And this event was soon to be realized. During the month of December he was attacked with a species of influenza, which, considering his age, he could hardly be supposed to withstand. The disease gradually undermined his system until

the 26th of that month, when he expired, in a back room of the third story of his house in Water street, having exhibited a life of perseverance, labor, economy, and successful enterprise, of which there are but few examples on record.

But we are furnished with a clear insight into the character of the man, from the import of his will. The question might naturally have been asked, while this extraordinary individual was living, what could be his object in accumulating such large masses of wealth? It could not have been the spirit of the miser, who would grasp his bars of gold, and if it were practicable, carry them with him into his grave, for he dispensed his bounties largely to favorite benevolent purposes while living. That testamentary instrument, however, disclosed all; for the bulk of his fortune of many millions was devised precisely for those ends and in that mode which would seem calculated to confer upon the testator the most extensive and lasting fame. This solitary, and to the world cold-hearted man, had an end in view which was not perceived by his contemporaries. The savings of years of toil were to be disposed in bulk upon that community in the midst of which he had gathered them, and

in gaining for himself a name. In order to understand directly the principles on which he acted, we need only to examine the provisions of his will. Besides several individual annuities, this "mariner and merchant," as he styles himself in that instrument, gives and bequeaths to the "contributors to the Pennsylvania hospital," the sum of thirty thousand dollars; and to the "Pennsylvania Institution for the Deaf and Dumb," twenty thousand. To "the Controllers of the Public Schools for the city and county of Philadelphia," ten thousand; to the "Orphans' Asylum" of that city, ten thousand; to the "Society for the Relief of Distressed Masters of Ships," ten thousand; to the "Masonic Loan," twenty thousand; for the erection of a public school, six thousand; to all the captains of the ships in his employ, having performed a given service, fifteen hundred dollars each; to his apprentices, each five hundred dollars; two hundred and eight thousand French arpents or acres of land, with thirty slaves, he bequeathed to the city of New-Orleans, and the remainder of his lands in Louisiana, to the corporation of Philadelphia. To the "Commonwealth of Pennsylvania" he gives three hundred thousand

dollars, for the purpose of internal improvements; and as much as is deemed necessary of the sum of two millions of dollars, is also devised for the erection of an orphan college, a foundation of a peculiar and original structure, besides other bounties of like character. In this will he clearly showed what had been the object of his long and fixed labor in acquisition. While he was forward, with an apparent disregard of self, to expose his life in behalf of others in the midst of pestilence, to aid the internal improvements of the country, and to promote its commercial prosperity by all the means within his power, he yet had more ambitious designs. He wished to hand himself down to immortality by the only mode that was practicable for a man in his position, and he accomplished precisely that which was the grand aim of his life. He wrote his epitaph in those extensive and magnificent blocks and squares which adorn the streets of his adopted city, in the public works and eleemosynary establishments of his adopted state, and erected his own monument and embodied his own principles in a *marble-roofed* palace for the education of the orphan poor. We who shall hereafter gaze upon that

splendid edifice, the most perfect model of architecture in the new world, will perceive the result of the singular character of its founder, and shall be left in doubt whether, after all, his faults were not overbalanced by his ultimate munificence.\*

\* The foregoing article is from the pen of Mr. James H. Lanman Esq., who contributed it to Hunt's Merchant's Magazine, April 1841.

## MATTHEW CAREY.

THE characters of great and good men belong to mankind; and there is no duty more pleasant or useful, than that which seeks the recognition of their virtues, and stimulates in after life to the imitation of their example.

Few men have ever won a larger space in the public regard than Matthew Carey; and what constitutes that fact one of peculiar gratification to those who knew him best, few indeed were ever more deserving of public esteem. There is, then, an agreeable service that we may render unto ourselves, in studying aright, if possible, the points of his character which went to make him what he was.

Mr. Carey was born in Ireland, on the 28th of January, 1760. His father was a very worthy man, and by the prudent exercise of his trade, that of a baker, amassed a handsome fortune. In early life, he was not remarkable for any extraordinary exhibition of his intellectual powers; and his education, previous to his reaching the age of fifteen was mostly

confined to the branches of a common English course.\* When, at that age, it became necessary to select a trade, his own inclination was decidedly in favour of that of a printer; and though he declares his father was very much opposed to that avocation, he was finally able to overcome the aversion, and went as an apprentice to a Mr. McDonnell, of Dublin, a printer and bookseller, who was tempted, being very poor, to take him, in consequence of the thirty guineas to be paid as apprentice fees.

He represents himself to have been a voracious reader, previous to his entering with McDonnell; and, like Franklin, in early life, he had made friends with the keeper of a circulating library, who used to supply him clandestinely with books, as his father was opposed to his perusing the promiscuous works usually, at that early day, to be met with in such an establishment.

In consequence of what he always considered, in after life, the carelessness of his nurse, he

\* Vide an Autobiographical Sketch, which he prepared not many years since, at the suggestion of a gentleman, (Mr. Buckingham) who, like Mr. Carey, is the architect of his own fame, of the facts of which free use will be made in this sketch.



was lame in one foot from the time he was a year old; and though he ever appeared to regard this as an unparalleled calamity, it was, no doubt, the means of securing him more studious habits in early life than he would otherwise have possessed, inasmuch as his infirmity seriously prevented his mingling in those athletic sports, which most always take up a considerable portion of youthful days.

He states that his first essay as a writer was when he was about the age of seventeen, and upon the subject of duelling. It was produced in consequence of a hostile meeting between a fellow apprentice, and the apprentice of a bookseller named Wogan. The difficulty grew out of a personal altercation between the lads, which ended in blows. Wogan very improperly urged his apprentice to send a challenge to the opponent, which was accordingly presented, demanding a meeting in the Park on a certain day, and Wogan went out with his lad, and was the master-spirit of the whole affair. Mr. Carey regarded his as most exceptionable conduct on behalf of Wogan, and, therefore, consequently wrote a bitter denunciation in the *Hibernia Journal*, a paper owned in part by Mr. McDonnell. Young Carey be-

came known as the author, and besides receiving a severe reprimand, his fellow apprentice, a poor orphan, was finally dismissed, to appease the temper of Wogan ; Carey was deeply indignant, and lost confidence in McDonnell.

The next production of which he gives account, was a pamphlet, written in 1779, in regard to the oppression upon the Irish Catholics ; and this, from its results, proved to be one of the most important events of his early career. It shows also much of the ardency, patriotism, and love of liberty, which we shall see were, through life, leading traits in the character of Matthew Carey. It bespeaks likewise a comprehensive survey of the great principles of universal freedom, which America had been, and was then, securing, not only for her own sons, but for the nations that should follow her glorious example.

It will be pertinent to reprint, in this connection, a single paragraph, sent as the parachute of the obnoxious pamphlet.

“ At a time when America, by a desperate effort, has nearly emancipated herself from slavery ; when, laying aside ancient prejudices, a Catholic king becomes the avowed patron of Protestant freeman ; when the tyranny

of a British Parliament over Ireland, has been annihilated by the intrepid spirit of Irishmen ; it is a most afflicting reflection, that you, my countrymen, the majority of that nation, which has shaken off an unjust English yoke, remain still enchained by one infinitely more galling : that you are, through your own pusillanimity, daily insulted by impudent menacing advertisements from insignificant parts of the kingdom ; that a few tyrannical bigots in Meath and Wexford, presume to take into their own hands the legislative and executive part of our government ; and with a dictatorial power, prescribe laws to their fellow subjects."

The issue produced much excitement ; and, Parliament being in session, the Duke of Leinster brought it before the House of Lords, and Sir Thomas Conelly before the House of Commons. It was denounced treasonable and seditious, and quoted in proof of the rebellious views of the Roman Catholics. Unfortunately for the cause of truth and human liberty, there has always been found in poor Ireland cringing sycophants to government, who at all hazards would sustain the " powers that be." It was declared to be in this spirit that a body of Roman Catholics—possessing not a particle of

that patriotism which accomplished the Irish insurrection of 1798, or the far nobler event of 1776, which declared "America a Nation of Freemen"—denounced the publication of young Carey, and offered a reward for the apprehension of its author. His father was greatly alarmed—took steps to have the pamphlet suppressed—and by the advice of his friends the son was secretly put on board a Holyhead packet and sent to France. He was introduced to Dr. Franklin, "who had a small printing office at Passy, a village near Paris, for the purpose of reprinting his despatches from America, and other papers." He worked a while for the Doctor, and afterwards with Didot le jeune, on some English books, which that printer was republishing. In about twelve months, the excitement having died away in his native country, young Carey returned home.

While in France, he was called upon by the Marquis de la Fayette, who was seeking information relative to the condition of Ireland, and we shall see that the great patriot and friend of American liberty did not forget the acquaintance, when he was subsequently in Philadelphia.

After his return to Dublin, by the assistance of his father, who had in the mean time pur-

chased of M'Donnell the balance of his son's apprenticeship, young Carey, then being twenty-two years of age, set up a paper called the Freeman's Journal. It was commenced in October, 1783, and is described by its editor, "as enthusiastic and violent." It soon obtained an extensive circulation, had decided influence on public opinion, "fanning the flame of patriotism which pervaded the land, and excited the indignation of government, which formed a determination to put it down." On the 7th of April, Mr. Foster moved in the House of Commons,

"That an address be presented to the Lord Lieutenant, requesting that he will please issue his proclamation, offering a reward for the apprehension of Matthew Carey." *Parliamentary Register*, 1783-4.

Mr. Carey was also prosecuted for a libel on the Premier. He was finally arrested in his own office, and conveyed to the house of the sergeant-at-arms, L'Estrange, as Parliament had previously adjourned. But Parliament re-assembled on the 19th of April, and he was taken before that body; and, to the astonishment of all the friends of any thing like liberty of speech, Mr. Carey was, by a vote of forty-three to forty,

committed to Newgate. On the 14th of May, "Parliament having adjourned, and their power of detention in prison having ceased, I was, (says Mr. Carey) triumphantly liberated by the Lord Mayor." But, he adds, "although thus freed from the clutches of the Parliament, the criminal prosecution for the libel on John Foster, the Premier, like the sword of Damocles, was suspended over my head." The Attorney General having besides filed a bill against him, *ex-officio*, to prevent the action of the Grand Jury, it was deemed best that he should quit his native country, inasmuch as justice was obviously to be denied by those in authority in "his own, his native land." Accordingly, in the disguise of a female dress, to escape the myrmidons of government, he took passage on board the *America*, on the 7th of September, 1784, and landed in Philadelphia on the 15th of November following.

In the difficulties and embarrassments that had attended his prosecution and imprisonment, his means had much run down, and when he landed on the wharf at Philadelphia, he was an entire stranger, with scarce a dozen guineas in his pocket! The newspaper had been sold to his brother for five hundred pounds, to be re-

mitted as soon as he could conveniently do so; but his hopes from that source were almost blasted, for he never received but fifty pounds, the Freeman's Journal having ultimately perished, "partly by the persecution of his brother, but chiefly by government's setting up a paper with the same name, in order to take its custom and destroy it."

But a very pleasant and unlooked-for event gave new courage to his hopes, if it did not indeed add a bright coloring to all his after career. We have said before that the Marquis de la Fayette had made a call upon young Carey while he was at the printing office of Passy, in France. He was then at Mount Vernon, whither a fellow-passenger of Mr. Carey's, named Wallace, had repaired to deliver letters which he brought to the Marquis. The Marquis made many inquiries of Wallace in relation to the affairs of Ireland, and observed, that he had seen "an account of the Parliament's proceedings against the persecuted printer, Matthew Carey." Wallace informed the Marquis that he came passenger with Mr. Carey, and that he was then in Philadelphia. Subsequently, on the Marquis's arriving in Philadelphia, he wrote Mr. Carey a note, desiring a call at his lodgings.

“He received me,” said Mr. Carey, “with great kindness, condoled with me on the persecution I had undergone, inquired into my prospects, and having told him I intended to set up a newspaper, he approved the idea, and promised to recommend me to his friends, Robert Morris, and others. Next morning a letter was handed to me from him, containing four one hundred dollar notes, on the Bank of North America, but it contained not a word in reference to the enclosure.” This was a noble act, worthy of the man who had expended a large portion of a princely fortune, and freely offered his life, in the cause of American liberty. He “meets a poor, persecuted young man, destitute of friends; his heart expands, and he freely gives him means of making a living, without the remotest expectation of a return, or of ever again seeing the object of his bounty.”

It is due to Mr. Carey to state, that he subsequently sent the Marquis a valuable present; and when he arrived in our country in 1824, in broken fortunes, he sent him, also, a check at New York, for the full sum of four hundred dollars, which Lafayette very reluctantly received.

If Bulwer had embodied the early career of



Mr. Carey, he might well have said of him, that,

“In the lexicon of youth, which Fate reserves  
For a bright manhood, there is no such word  
As *fail*.”

Actuated by this dauntless spirit, he immediately commenced a newspaper in Philadelphia, called the Pennsylvania Herald. He purchased his types out of his little fortune, and as a bookseller named Bell had recently deceased, among whose effects was an old and much worn press, Mr. Carey purposed its purchase; but Colonel Oswald, who purchased the Independent Gazetteer, regarding the commencement of another paper with rival feelings, bid against Mr. Carey, until he raised the price of the old press to fifty pounds, nearly as much as a new one of the same kind was worth, “being,” adds Mr. Carey, “one third of my whole fortune.”

The first number of his newspaper was issued on the 25th of January, 1785, and the history of its progress shows that none but an undaunted mind and indomitable spirit would ever have been successful in its establishment. The editor was a perfect stranger, totally unacquainted with the feelings, prejudices, and wishes of those he had come amongst. The first decided impression which the newspaper

made, was the commencement, in its columns, of the English newspaper practice of reporting, *in extenso*, the speeches of the house of Assembly. This was then novel in this country, and soon made the Herald much sought—especially as the editor showed a wonderful faculty in making his reports accurate. He was much aided in this by a most tenacious memory, which was at the bottom, in all his after life, of his storing away for ready use, probably, a greater body of valuable statistical and other knowledge than almost any man of the age in which he lived.

Parties at this period ran high in Pennsylvania, as they did elsewhere. The general classification was Constitutionalists and Republicans. "The former were supporters of the constitution then existing, which conferred the legislative powers on a single body, styled the House of Assembly; and the executive department on a president and executive council. The republicans were zealous for a change in the legislature, so as to have two branches, a Senate and House of Representatives. There were various minor points of difference, unnecessary to be particularized."

Colonel Oswald, of the Gazetteer, was the organ for the republicans, and wrote a very

violent attack on a society of foreigners, styled "the newly adopted sons of the United States." Mr. Carey, A. J. Dallas, and many other powerful writers, were members, and they annoyed the republican party very much with their pens. Colonel Oswald denounced the society as "foreign renegadoes." Mr. Carey wrote a reply, in which were these sentences :

"National reflections are as illiberal as they are unjust : but from Americans, they are something worse. A great part of the armies that nobly gained America her independence, were aliens, or foreigners, many of whose countrymen are now the subjects of obloquy and reproach. I mean French, Germans, Irish, etc."

A bitter newspaper controversy ensued, which finally terminated thus : Mr. Carey, in speaking of some of Colonel Oswald's paragraphs, holds this language :

"The literary assassin, who basely attempts to blast a character, is a villain, whether he strut in the glare of day a ferocious Colonel Oswald, with a drawcansir countenance, or skulks a Junius, concealed for a quarter of a century."

Colonel Oswald made this reply :

"Your being a cripple is your main protection against personal insults."

Mr. Carey's rejoinder was :

"Though I am a cripple, there is a certain mode in which I would be on equality. This hint is the less necessary to a man whose newspaper frequently holds out threats of coming to the point."

This correspondence Mr. Carey reprinted in a satirical poem, entitled, "The Plagi Scurriliad, addressed to Colonel Oswald." The latter returned it by a Captain Rice, who said, "Colonel Oswald considers this a challenge." Mr. Carey coolly replied, "It was so intended," and referred him to a Mr. Marmie, a French gentleman, of the house of Turnbull, Marmie, & Co. The seconds fixed on Saturday, the 21st of January, 1786, for the day of meeting. They met accordingly, in New Jersey, opposite the city. Colonel Oswald having served in the army, was a practised shot, while Mr. Carey had never drawn a trigger but once in his life. They were at ten paces distance, when the word was given, and the pistol of Colonel Oswald shot his antagonist through the thigh bone, which laid him up for nearly sixteen months. All the records of the times show that both parties behaved coolly and magnanimously on the ground; and the result was more fortunate than most

duels are, for it appears to have made the parties feel towards each other, with the generous Frenchman, Colonel Damas: "It is astonishing how much I like a man after I've fought with him."

It is but simple justice to Mr. Carey to add here, that he deprecated his having engaged in this duel during all his after life: and following up his early impressions, he continued to wield his pen against this relic of the ages of barbarism, which has, through a false notion of honor, swept away from America so many valuable lives. Mr. Carey appears to have acted throughout with a firm conviction that it was the determined purpose of Colonel Oswald and his friends to blast his character and destroy his hopes; and, urged forward by a natural warmth of temperament, he declares, "On one thing I was resolved: if I displayed the white feather, I would never see Philadelphia more."

The next work in which Mr. Carey was concerned, was the *Columbian Magazine*, wherein he was interested with four other partners. He finally, however, withdrew, and commenced the *American Museum*, a magazine "intended to preserve the valuable fugitive essays that appeared in the newspapers," which he continued

until December, 1787. But the times were not very propitious for magazines in those early days, and it should be mentioned as a matter of encouragement to others to persevere under great difficulties, that Mr. Carey declares himself often in such a state of "intense penury," that he was frequently compelled to "borrow money to go to market." As a specimen of his extreme poverty, he quotes the case of a German paper-maker living fifteen miles from the city, to whom Mr. Carey had given a note for thirty-seven dollars, which he had to come to Philadelphia five times for, receiving the amount in as many instalments.

The marriage of Mr. Carey was the next event of importance. Miss B. Flahavan, the daughter of a highly respectable citizen, who, like thousands of others, was ruined by the revolution, was the partner of his choice. She had no dowry but that of prudence, intelligence, and industry, and these are far richer than any other that can be bestowed. She had united herself to a man whose whole fortune consisted of a few hundred dollars' worth of furniture, and some back numbers of his magazine, comparatively valueless as soon as the work was abandoned. But what of that? Both husband

and wife had minds filled with good common sense. They had no false pride to retard their efforts. They were persevering and economical, and together they resolved to make their way in the world. "We early," says the husband, "formed a determination to indulge in no unnecessary expense, and to mount the ladder so slowly, as to run no risk of having to descend." What a salutary example is here written in one sentence for the young of our day! How altered is the mode of beginning the marriage life now-a-days. Large rents, expensive establishments, unlimited debts, "routs and rounds of fashion," are at once launched into; and the young couple live on, so long as petty shifts, contrivances, and deceptions will sustain them, and then sink into homeless misery, from which perchance they never recover. "Daughters, tenderly reared, and who have brought handsome fortunes to their husbands, are often obliged to return home to their aged parents, who have to maintain them, their husbands, and their children—a deplorable fate for old age." Fathers have the unspeakable misery of beholding their sons, in whom the hopes of after years were centred, broken down, indolent, reckless, dissipated—hanging on society as pests and nuisances,

instead of becoming ornaments and examples of it. Oh, "what masses of misery would it not prevent," if the young men of our day would adopt the shining and virtuous example of the heads of the family, the incidents of whose lives we may so profitably dwell upon !

They lived happily together for nearly thirty-nine years,—until the death of Mrs. Carey, which occurred many years since,—rearing a family of six children, two having died in infancy, and one at the age of seventeen. The prudential habits, fixed principles, and strong common sense, which ever guided these parents, have been reflected in the estimable characters of their children. It will not be proper to speak here as we might be tempted to do, of the living ; but we may be allowed the remark, as proof of correct parental guidance, that the gentlemen and ladies of this family are worthily ranked among our most estimable citizens. The eldest son, Mr. Henry C. Carey, was for many years known as one of the extensive book house of Carey, Lea, & Co., from which he retired, a few years since, with an ample fortune, as the result of strict application to business, and unfaltering mercantile honor. That gentleman, too, is a good writer, and his last work, which was upon



political economy, has met high consideration from the ablest reviews of our own country, and those of England also.

After the relinquishment of the Museum Magazine, Mr. Carey commenced printing and book-selling on a limited scale, but by the most unceasing industry, perseverance, and integrity, he went on gradually extending his business, and making slow but sure steps to wealth. "Some idea," says Mr. Carey, "may be formed of my devotion to business, from the fact, that, for above twenty-five years, I was present, winter and summer, at the opening of my store; and, my parlor being close to the store, I always left my meals when business of any importance was being transacted." How different this from the custom of too many of the present day! Up pretty much all night in the whirlpool of false society, the morn has wasted into noon ere they come out to their places of business, and in the afternoon, instead of "minding the shop," they find it "indispensable to health" to whirl out of town in a cabriolet." If the example of such a man as Matthew Carey is worth any thing, let those who are determined to succeed in life, reform altogether those habits, which are sure, sooner or later, to bring destruction upon them.

Neglect of business, luxurious living, attempts at show, and false pride, are the alarming evils that lie in the path of many of the young beginners of our day, of all trades, professions, and avocations; and what lessons of caution and wisdom may we not learn from the characters, habits, and principles of the substantial men who have preceded us, and who, by slow but sure efforts, went steadily up to positions from which they had no fear of tumbling! Better to commence small, than to begin large and finally be broken down; and the entire history and experience of all the straightforward and sagacious merchants of the past, is a triumphant illustration, that industry, prudence, and honesty, are sure to ascend, in the long run, where all else may fail. Stephen Girard was once a poor sailor boy before the mast; William Gray, an humble mechanic; and Peter C. Brooks, a small salary secretary in an insurance office; and yet they went up by their own hands, became honorable merchants, and amassed princely fortunes. They were, like all men who have made to themselves fame or fortune, hard workers and close thinkers. They "minded their own business," and, what was of infinite con-

sequence, had no time to meddle with that of other people.

Their examples may well be imitated, for rigid mercantile integrity, and unfaltering punctuality in the performance of every obligation, by all who wish to go up in the right way.

In 1793, Mr. Carey was a most efficient member of the committee of health, with Mr. Girard and others, when the yellow fever prevailed so dreadfully in Philadelphia. Both these gentlemen were very active in their devotion to the sick. When it was found impossible, from the danger of the situation, to obtain any one to become superintendent of the hospital at Bush-hill, Stephen Girard nobly stepped forward; and Mr. Carey states that Mr. G, "helped to dress the sores, and perform all the menial offices for the sick." Mr. Carey wrote a history of this dreadful calamity, giving a "full account of its rise, progress, effects, and termination." It is a thrilling narrative.

In the same year, Mr. Carey, regarding with deep commiseration the forlorn condition of many of his countrymen who came to our shores, was principally instrumental in the formation of a society called "The Hibernian Society, for the relief of emigrants from Ireland;" an institution

which has since done much good, and is still numbered among our most beneficial societies.

While Cobbett was in Philadelphia, in 1796, some meddlesome individuals sought to embroil Mr. Carey in an angry controversy with him. In one of Cobbett's previous works, he had mentioned Mr. Carey favourably, and the meddlers were constantly throwing out insinuations that Cobbett was afraid of him. Mr. Carey addressed a note to Cobbett, early on this attempted embroilment, in which he tells him, "I have never written a line respecting you, and my determination is to pursue the same line of conduct, unless I am driven to a different course by unprovoked aggression." But it seems that the issue finally came, and a very bitter one it was. It was a newspaper and pamphlet war of some time continuance, wherein many hard things were said by both parties. Mr. Carey finally published what he termed "a Plumb Pudding for Peter Porcupine," handling his adversary without gloves. Cobbett, to turn this publication into ridicule, "sent his servant with some venison and jelly between two plates, in return for the plumb pudding," which his antagonist sent back by a stout Irish porter, with directions to throw the plates in the middle of

Cobbett's store, which the Hibernian did most faithfully, and shook his fists at Cobbett into the bargain.\* Subsequently, Mr. Carey issued a Hudibrastic poem, the purpose of which was to show up the scurrility and abuse that found place in Cobbett's newspaper; and so ludicrously did he do this, that it had the effect to end the "tug of war." Cobbett never made any reply afterwards.

In 1802, Mr. Carey was elected by the Senate of the state a director of the bank of Pennsylvania, which station he occupied until 1805. He mentions, as a disadvantage to him from the position, the lenity shown by the other directors, whereby his debts rose extravagantly high. This evil he urges with great warmth and zeal, as the one which several times in his business-life came near bringing him to bankruptcy. "I printed and published," he declares, "above twice as many books as were necessary for the extent of my business; and, in consequence, incurred oppressive debts to banks—was laid under contribution for interest to them and to usurers, which not only swallowed up my

\* Mr. Carey did not speak of this act, in after life, in any other way, than as an unjustifiable ebullition of passion.

profits, but kept me in a constant state of penury. I was in many cases shaved so close by the latter class, that they almost skinned me alive. To this cause my difficulties were nearly altogether owing, for I did a large and profitable business almost from the time I opened a bookstore."

He sets down another evil practice of his business career, which he cautions young traders to shun as they would "temporal perdition." It is that of endorsation. "In this way, in fourteen years," he writes, "I lost between thirty and forty thousand dollars; and but for this, I might have retired from business ten years earlier than I did; besides, in one of the cases of failure, I was brought to the verge of stoppage." Actuated by that expansive benevolence, which, during his whole life, was a leading trait in his character, Mr. Carey, about this time, and for some years onward, wrote and published much to try and bring about a modification of the taxes of Philadelphia. His positions were founded on the great inequality that existed between the taxes on real estate and personal property. He states an example, viz: "Stephen Girard did not pay as much tax for all the stock of his bank, and all his bonds and mortgages,

as were paid by a single ground rent of two hundred dollars. Some salutary improvements were finally made, especially so far as related to "ground rents and houses."

The next subject of public importance in which his pen became deeply engaged was, in 1810, on the question of the renewal of the charter of the Bank of the United States. He wrote a series of essays warmly advocating the renewal, and gave much personal attention to the matter, as well at home as at the seat of the general government, which, all those who are familiar with the records of the times are aware, made him many bitter opponents, as well as many warm friends, according to the character of their views in regard to the measure in agitation.

The publication of "The Olive Branch" Mr. Carey regards as one of the most important events of his life. It took place in 1814. The purpose which the author had in producing it was, to "endeavor, by a candid publication of the follies and errors of both sides, to calm the embittered feeling of the political parties." The first edition was produced within the leisure time of six or seven weeks. It formed a duodecimo volume of two hundred and fifty-two pages, of

which about eighty were public documents. It was sold out immediately, and the author says, "I was preparing a new edition when the thrice-welcome news of peace arrived, which I thought would render it unnecessary." But he subsequently had good reason to change that opinion, by the demands that came in; and one edition after another was prepared, each one receiving some version or addition, until, within three years and a half, ten editions were struck off, there having been over ten thousand copies sold.

The next large work he produced, was, "*The Vindiciæ Hiberniciæ*," which made its appearance in 1819. His object in writing this work was, to prove, among many other positions, that, from the invasion of Ireland by Cromwell, the government of that country had been marked by almost every species of "fraud, chicane, cruelty, and oppression;" that the Irish were, from time to time, goaded into insurrection; that they did not enjoy the free exercise of their religion; that the pretended conspiracy of 1641 was a miserable fabrication, and that the massacres, said to have been committed by the Irish in the insurrection of the same year, are unfounded in fact. There have been, and will continue to be, various opinions as to the success



with which the author has made out his assumptions ; but there is one thing, which everybody will be very ready to admit, viz. : that the author brought great patience, perseverance, and industry, to its preparation, for he consulted not less than sixty different works, and made five hundred and ninety-six quotations. In Ireland, especially, the book received great praise, having been pronounced by the highest authorities, as "the best vindication of Ireland that was ever written."

Soon after the publication of his "Vindication of Ireland," he entered the lists in favor of "The Protective System of American Industry," and became for many years the untiring champion of that policy, in its broadest extent. He wrote a series of nine essays, which were published by a very reputable society, established in Philadelphia to aid in the encouragement of domestic industry. They were anxiously sought for by the friends of the system, and were generally copied into the newspapers north of the Potomac. Subsequently he brought forth numerous other writings, favoring the "Protective System," forming, in all, fifty-nine distinct publications, and embracing, in the whole, two thousand three hundred and twenty-two pages.

Besides, he was always ready to put his hand in his pocket, and did so, to a very large extent, to aid in the advocacy of a system which he had embraced with such ardency. As was the case when he came out so warmly for a re-charter of the former United States Bank, his efforts provoked many opponents, and won him also many warm friends, as was natural from the controverted nature of the subject which he so zealously advocated. Many public demonstrations of gratitude followed his labors, and there were, also, indications of public opinion, denunciatory of his toils and his views in no stinted terms.

In Professor Longfellow's recent work, *Hyperion*, are to be found these beautiful and expressive sentences:

"It has become a common saying, that men of genius are always in advance of their age; which is true. There is something equally true, yet not so common, namely, that, of these men of genius, the best and bravest are in advance, not only of their own age, but of every age. As the German prose-poet says, 'every possible future is behind them.' "

In no inapt sense may we apply this to Matthew Carey. His penetration and sagacity

seemed to keep him uniformly in advance of most others on great subjects of state and national importance. As a proof of this, we may quote what is stated by a worthy compeer, now living, viz.: "That he was the first man in Pennsylvania to awaken public attention to the vast importance of a great system of internal improvements." He wrote pamphlets and circulated them, prepared a great many newspaper essays, and, finally, addressed letters to influential men in different parts of the state, inviting them to a meeting, to devise ways and means to secure, ultimately, the incalculable blessings of extended internal communication ; and he lived, with many of his patriotic co-laborers, to witness the state of Pennsylvania not in the rear, at least, of any member of the American Republic, either in the extent or value of her internal intercourse.

Mr. Carey took an active part in all the worthy charities of the day. He seemed to have an ambition to do good, and whenever he took hold of a cause, he brought to it the devotion of his early days. He was a bold and unceasing advocate of the great system of universal education, utterly repudiating the idea that there should be an education for the rich, and another for the poor, zealously declaring that he

would have education as free as the genial air. His labors in behalf of the poor—constantly seeking, both by his pen and his bounty, to ameliorate their condition—were untiring and disinterested. Especially have poor widows, left with a family of little ones to support, cause to remember in thankfulness the ever-readiness with which his heart and his purse were open to their forlorn hopes. For a long series of years he had a charity list, on which were enrolled the names of hundreds, to whom he regularly gave, once each fortnight, a donation of groceries and other necessities of life; and where they are to find another such a friend as Matthew Carey—God only knows!

In the entire efforts of Matthew Carey, he ever appeared to act upon the principle, “to let good offices go round.” In his more elaborate writings, what he regards as the great interests of his fellow men, appear to form the leading motive in their composition. His last publication of any extent was a small volume, on the subject of domestic economy, entitled, “The Philosophy of Common Sense,” the object of which was to embody his experience, and the maxims of his career of fourscore years. In the preface he feelingly states, that it will pro-

bably be the last one he shall ever give to the public: and now that the prediction is reality, we may safely declare, if he had produced nothing else, this little work would raise for him an enduring monument, in proof of the philosophic and common sense tone of his mind, and the benevolence and affection of his heart.

There was one feature in the life of Mr. Carey, which was of inestimable value to the young; and it cannot be too much commended to other gentlemen of leisure and ample fortune. It was a disposition to extend the hand of kindness to young men whom he observed of promising talents, justly ambitious, and systematically industrious. He would go out of his way to meet such, and to make them feel that he respected and was ever ready to aid them. He had not a particle of that small cliqueism which is too often the disgrace of literary men, nor had he any of the false pride which unfortunately becomes the guiding power of many a man who has gone up to wealth by his own hands. On the contrary, his house, his counsel, his library, his heart, all were open to the young, the ambitious, and deserving; and many an enterprising citizen can go back and date the hour of his triumph to the unfaltering smiles which he ever

met from the beaming countenance of Matthew Carey; and, as perseverance, industry, economy, and integrity, were the Corinthian columns of his own character, he delighted to impress upon his vast body of young friends, that upon none other could they ever rear enduring fame or substantial wealth.

Mr. Carey breathed his last, at his own residence in Walnut street, on the evening of Monday, the 17th of September 1839, at the ripe age of eighty years. His funeral denoted the universal esteem of his fellow citizens. It was one of the largest, excepting, perhaps, that of Stephen Girard, that ever occurred in Philadelphia. Many societies joined in the procession. The body was borne to St. Mary's Church, where the solemn service of the dead was performed. The church was crowded to excess, thousands having come forth, spontaneously, to pay the last tribute of respect to one who ended his labors of benevolence only when he ceased to breathe!

“Such pass away; but they leave  
All hope, or love, or truth, or liberty,  
Whose forms their mighty spirits could conceive,  
To be a rule and law to ages that survive.”

## WILLIAM PARSONS.

THE good merchant is scrupulously just and upright in all his transactions. Integrity, good faith, exactness in fulfilling his engagements, are prominent and distinctive features in his character. He is a high-minded and honorable man; he would feel a stain upon his good name like a wound, and regards with utter abhorrence every thing that wears the appearance of meanness or duplicity. Knowing that credit is the soul of business, he is anxious to sustain the integrity of the mercantile character. Accordingly, his word is as good as his bond. He stands to his bargain, and is faithful to his contract. He is like the good man described by the Psalmist,

“Who to his plighted vows and trust  
Hath ever firmly stood;  
And though he promise to his loss,  
He makes his promise good.”

He would rather at any time relinquish something of his lawful rights, than engage in an irritating dispute. He would rather be the object than the agent in a dishonorable or

fraudulent transaction. When one told old Bishop Latimer that the cutler had cozened him in making him pay two pence for a knife not worth a penny, "No," said Latimer, "he cozened not me, but his own conscience."

The good merchant is not in haste to be rich, observing that they who are so, are apt to "fall into temptation and a snare," and often make shipwreck of their honor and virtue. He pursues commerce as his chosen calling, his regular employment. He expects to continue in it long, perhaps all his days, and is therefore content to make small profits and accumulate slowly. When he first entered into business, he was determined not to be a drudge, nor be chained to the desk like a galley-slave, nor make his counting-room his home. He recollects that he is not merely a merchant, but a man; and that he has a mind to improve, a heart to cultivate, and a character to form. He is therefore resolved to have time to develope and store his intellect, to exercise his social affections, and to enjoy in moderation the innocent and rational pleasures of life. He accordingly sets apart and consecrates a portion of his time, his evenings at least, to be spent at home, in the bosom of his family. He will not, on any



account, deny himself of this relaxation; he will not, for any consideration, rob himself of this source of improvement and happiness. He is willing, if need be, to labor more years in order to obtain the desired amount of wealth, provided he can improve himself in the mean time, and enjoy life as he goes along.

The good merchant, though an enterprising man, and willing to run some risks, knowing this to be essential to success in commercial adventure, yet is not willing to risk every thing, nor put all on the hazard of a single throw. He feels that he has no right to do this—that it is morally wrong thus to put in jeopardy his own peace and the comfort and prospects of his family. Of course he engages in no wild and visionary schemes, the results of which are altogether uncertain, being based upon unreasonable expectations and improbable suppositions. He is particularly careful to embark in no speculation out of his regular line of business, and with the details of which he is not familiar. He is aware, that although he knows all about the cost of a ship, and can determine the quality and estimate the value of a bale of cotton, he is not a good judge of the worth of wild lands, having had no experience therein. Accordingly,

he will have nothing to do with any bargains of this sort, however promising they may appear. He will not take a leap in the dark, nor purchase upon the representations of others, who may be interested in the sale; fearing lest what is described to him as a well-timbered township may turn out to be a barren waste, and what appears, on paper, a level and well-watered district, may be found, on inspection, a steep and stony mountain, of no value whatever. He therefore deems it safest for him to keep clear of these grand speculations, and to attend, quietly and regularly, to his own business. Above all, he makes it a matter of conscience not to risk in hazardous enterprises the property of others entrusted to his keeping.

The good merchant, having thus acquired a competency, and perhaps amassed a fortune, is liberal in dispensing his wealth.

At the outset, he is careful to indulge in no extravagance, and to live within his means, the neglect of which precaution he finds involves so many in failure and ruin. Simple in his manners, and unostentatious in his habits of life, he abstains from all frivolous and foolish expenditures. At the same time, he is not niggardly or mean. On the contrary, he is liberal in the

whole arrangement of his household, where every thing is for use and comfort, and nothing for ostentation and display. Whatever will contribute to the improvement and welfare of his family, or whatever will gratify their innocent tastes, be it books, or engravings, or pictures, he obtains, if within his means, though it cost much; knowing that at the same time he may foster the genius and reward the labors of our native authors and artists, an estimable class of men, whose works reflect honor upon their country, and who consequently merit the patronage of the community. But whatever is intended for mere parade and vain show, he will have none of, though it cost nothing. He thinks it wise and good economy to spend a great deal of money, if he can afford it, to render home attractive, and to make his children wise, virtuous, and happy. Above all, he never grudges what is paid to the faithful schoolmaster for their intellectual and moral training; for a good education he deems above all price.

Having thus liberally provided for all the wants of his household, the good merchant remembers and cares for all who are related to him, and who may in any way stand in need of his aid. And this aid is administered in the

most kind and delicate manner. He does not wait to be solicited; he will not stop to be thanked. He anticipates their wishes, and by a secret and silent bounty removes the painful sense of dependence and obligation. He feels it a pleasure, as well as a duty, to help them; he claims it as his privilege to do good unto his brethren. He would feel ashamed to have his needy relatives relieved by public charity or private alms.

But our good merchant feels that he has duties, not only to his immediate relatives and friends, but to a larger family, the community in which he lives. He is deeply interested in its virtue and happiness, and feels bound to contribute his full share to the establishment and support of all good institutions, particularly the institutions of learning, humanity, and religion. He is led to this by the expansive and liberalising spirit of his calling. It is, unfortunately, the tendency of some occupations to narrow the mind and contract the heart. The mere division of labor, incident to, and inseparable from, many mechanical and manufacturing pursuits, though important and beneficial in other respects, yet serves to cramp and dwarf the intellect. The man who spends all his days in making the

heads of pins, thinks of nothing else, and is fit for nothing else. Commercial pursuits, on the other hand, being so various, extensive, and complicate, tend to enlarge the mind, and banish narrow and selfish feelings. The merchant looks abroad over the world, puts a girdle round the earth, has communications with all climes and all nations, and is thus led to take large and liberal views of all things. The wealth which he has acquired easily and rapidly, he is consequently disposed to spend freely and munificently. It has been beautifully said of Roscoe, the distinguished Liverpool merchant, "Wherever you go, you perceive traces of his footsteps in all that is elegant and liberal. He found the tide of wealth flowing merely in the channels of traffic; he has diverted from it invigorating rills to refresh the gardens of literature. The noble institutions for literary and scientific purposes, which reflect such credit on that city, have mostly been originated, and have all been effectually promoted by him." In like manner, our good merchant encourages learning, and patronises learned men. He is particularly liberal in endowing the higher seats of education, whence flow the streams that make glad the cities and churches of our God.

The good merchant is, likewise, a munificent benefactor to all institutions which have for their object the alleviation of human wretchedness, and the cure of the thousand ills which flesh is heir to. He lends, too, a substantial support to the institutions of religion. He feels the need of them himself, and he understands their unspeakable importance to the peace, good order, and virtue of society. He thinks that he sleeps sounder, and that his property is more secure, in a community where the sanctions of religion are superadded to the penalties of the law; where the stated inculcation of religious principles and sentiments diffuses a healthy moral atmosphere, which, though unseen, presses, like the weight of the surrounding air, upon every part of the body politic, and keeps it in its place. Accordingly, he contributes cheerfully and liberally to the support of public worship, and moreover, as Fuller says of the good parishioner, "he is bountiful in contributing to the repair of God's house, conceiving it fitting that such sacred places should be handsomely and decently maintained."

Such we conceive to be the character of the good merchant. It may, perhaps, be thought by some, that the character is a visionary one; and

that, amidst the competitions of trade, the temptations to unlawful gain, the eager desire of accumulating, and the natural unwillingness to part with what has been acquired with much labor and pains, there can be no place for the high-minded and generous virtues which we have described. We might have thought so too, if we had never seen them exhibited in actual life. The portrait which we have attempted to draw and now present is not a fancy sketch, but a transcript from nature and reality.

WILLIAM PARSONS was born at Byfield, Massachusetts, on the 6th of August, 1755. He was the son of the Rev. Moses Parsons, the clergyman of that town, and was one of eight children, three daughters and five sons, among the latter of whom was the late distinguished chief justice of Massachusetts. After receiving a good education at Dunmer Academy, he became an apprentice to an elder brother who was engaged in trade at Gloucester. Before coming of age, however, he entered upon the hard and perilous life of a sailor, which he pursued for five years, having the command of a vessel, and making many successful voyages. Like many other of our rich merchants, who were the architects of their own fortune, he took his first

lessons in industry and enterprise amidst the hardships, privations, and dangers of a sea life ; than which, there is no better school for the developement and exercise of intellectual and moral energy.

In 1780, at the age of twenty-five, Mr. Parsons quitted the sea, and married the lady who, for forty-seven years, by her congenial spirit and the similarity of her views, by sympathising in all his benevolent feelings, and co-operating in all his plans and deeds of charity, contributed so much to make his life tranquil and his home happy. In the same year he entered into business, and removed to Boston, where he remained till his death, a period of fifty-seven years, actively engaged to the last in commerce and navigation, having, at the time of his demise, one vessel upon the ocean, and dying, at the age of eighty-one, the oldest merchant and ship-owner in Boston.

The prominent traits in the character of Mr. Parsons, were his unbending integrity, his uncompromising adherence to truth and right, his conscientious regard for duty, his entire freedom from selfishness, and his tender and comprehensive benevolence. These qualities shed a



daily beauty on his life, and spread a sacred fragrance over his memory.

In the mercantile community, no one stood higher than Mr. Parsons;—his very name was synonymus with integrity. In all his transactions he was systematic, exact, high-minded, honorable. By a regular, yet not slavish attention to business, he amassed a handsome fortune, which would have been much larger, had he made business the sole end of life, or had he not distributed his wealth, as he went along, with such a free and liberal hand. His losses, which at times were great, never disturbed his singular equanimity; he regretted them only as curtailing his means of doing good. To his honor it should be mentioned, that he never had a dispute with the numerous mechanics and laborers whom he employed. He might sometimes, indeed, think himself wronged, and perhaps say so; but yet he would pay the bill, and leave the man to settle the matter with his own conscience.

The wealth he had thus honorably acquired, he spent in the most generous manner. He had an open heart and an open hand. Considering his first duty to be to his own family and relatives, he gathered them under his wing, and

overshadowed them with his love. His house was like a patriarch's tent, or the gathering-place of a tribe. He was a sort of universal providence, remembering the forgotten, and attending the neglected. The absent were not out of his mind, nor the distant beyond the reach of his care.

But his good feelings and charities were not confined within this circle, large though it was. The destitute, the sick, the afflicted, resorted to him for aid and solace, and never applied in vain.

“His secret bounty largely flowed,  
And brought unask'd relief.”

Was any new charity contemplated, any humane object set on foot in the city, Mr. Parsons was one of the first to be applied to, to give it the sanction of his approval and the encouragement of his purse. And such applications frequent though they were, he always attended to most cheerfully, and responded to most liberally, deeming it a favor that the opportunity was afforded him of doing his part in promoting a good object.

His house was long the seat of a generous, but quiet and unostentatious hospitality, where there was nothing for display, but every thing for the comfort of his guests. His doors were

open for his friends to enter at all times, and they were sure to be received with a cheerful welcome and a placid smile.

He departed this life in the spring of 1837, full of years, full of usefulness, and full of honors. As has been beautifully said of another "Death, which harmonises the pictures of human character, found little in his to spiritualise or to soften. Kindness of disposition was the secret but active law of his moral being. He had no sense of injury but as something to be forgiven. The liberal allowance which he extended to all human frailties grew more active when they affected his own interests and interfered with his own hopes; so that however he might reprobate evil at a distance, as soon as it came within his sphere, he desired only to overcome it by good. Envy, hatred, and malice, were to him mere names,—like the figures of speech in a school-boy's theme, or the giants in a fairy tale,—phantoms which never touched him with a sense of reality. His guileless simplicity of heart was preserved by the happy constitution of his own nature, which passion could not disturb, and evil had no power to stain. He diffused the serenity of a good conscience, and the warmth of unchilled affections, through

a large circle of relatives and friends, who were made happy by his mere presence. Such was he to the last, amidst the infirmities which age had accumulated round him—the gentlest of monitors and the most considerate of sufferers.”

“Of no distemper, of no blast he died,  
But fell like autumn fruit that mellowed long ;  
E’en wondered at because he dropped no sooner.  
Fate seemed to wind him up for fourscore years,  
Yet freshly ran he on two winters more :  
Till, like a clock worn out with eating time,  
The wheels of weary life at last stood still.”

THE END.

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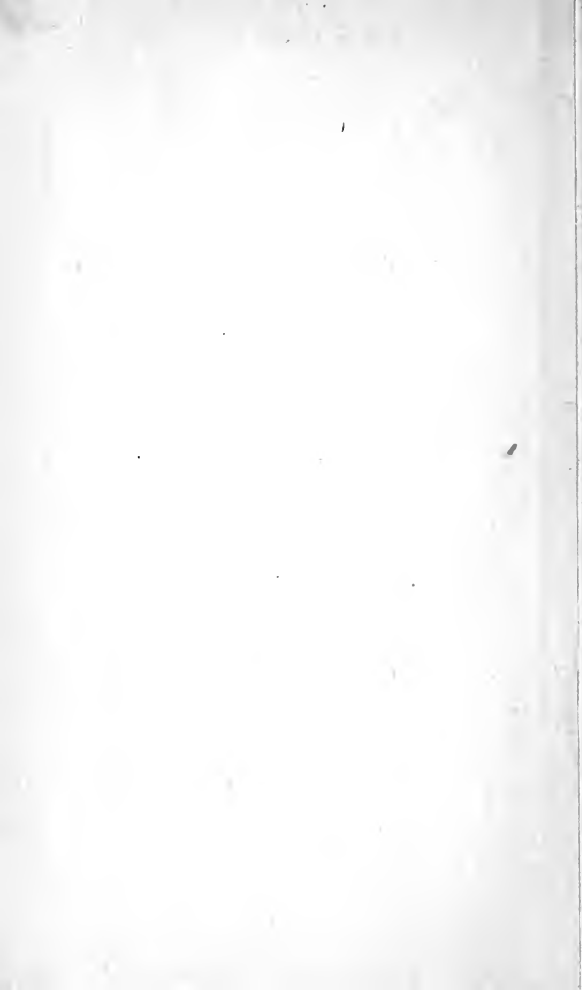












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